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AUGUST/
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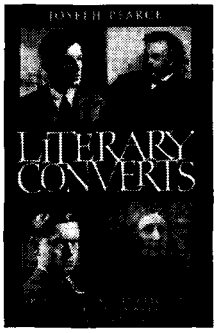

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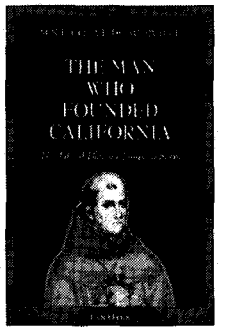

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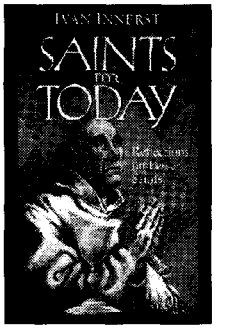

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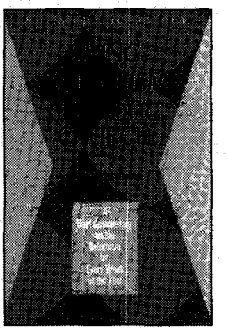

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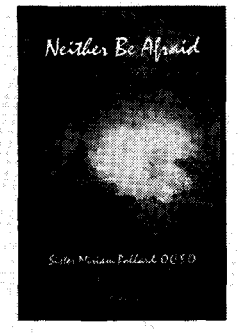

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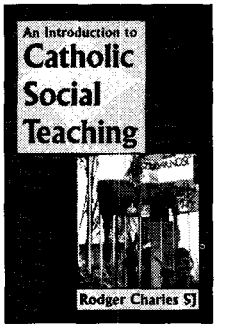

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Correspondence

Love and Sex

I am disappointed in Gilbert Meilaender's review of Eugene Rogers' book *Sexuality and the Christian Body* ("What Sex Is—And Is For," April). Rogers speaks of love and equates it with sex. But Professor Meilaender misses the point, and instead of denying the connection between love and sex he accepts the connection and tries to critique it in terms of orthodox Christian morality. With regard to the homosexual community this is an exercise in futility.

Love has a very good one-word synonym: sacrifice. Sex is getting your jollies. While gays may love one another, homosexuality itself is not about love at all. It is about the pleasures of sex. For married couples sex is an incidental part of the relationship; for homosexuals the practice of sex *is* the relationship.

Ask any combat veteran, especially from World War II. In combat a man and his buddy are as close a same-sex couple as you can get. The love between the two can be stronger than that of a man for his parents or even his wife and children. But there is no sex.

Hollywood was the first to combine love and sex in the popular mind. Until the two can be thought of separately again society will have to put up with high divorce rates, teenage pregnancy, and homosexual demands for marriage. Meilaender had a chance to distinguish love and sex in his review of *Sexuality and the Christian Body*. In my opinion he blew it.

George Noonan
Sylmar, California

Gilbert Meilaender replies:
I did indeed fail to do what Mr. Noonan wanted, and I failed because I think it would be a disastrous thing to do. Critical though I was of Eugene Rogers' book, I would never dream of criticizing him simply because he seeks a connection between love and sex, nor would I ever say that sex is "incidental" to the one-flesh union of marriage. There are, of course, some kinds of love that are not sexual at all. But that is not true of erotic love. Though not purely sexual, it always teeters on the brink of sexual expression. More important still, it is precisely by being drawn into a bond of love that our sexual appetites are healed and humanized. The point is not to sever the connection between love and sex, but to ask what kind of loving union can truly heal our wayward desires.

Philosophy, Theology, and Faith

Avery Dulles asks "Can Philosophy Be Christian?" (April), and he gives us a perceptive and helpful survey of several replies, mostly by Catholic philosophers. He is himself apparently optimistic for the prospects of Christian philosophy, ending his article by referring to a reestablishment of the harmony between faith and reason that "can help to prepare for the new springtime of faith."

His comment about Anselm, however, seems to me to sound a more cautionary note. He says of Anselm that "having accepted the existence of God and the fact of the Incarnation on authority in faith, he tried to demonstrate these truths by 'necessary reasons' that would compel the assent of Jews and pagans who did not credit the authority of Scripture. He apparently considered that he had succeeded in this endeavor."

Now, Father Dulles may indeed be correct in his reading of Anselm. However, if he is, then what in the

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world could Anselm himself have been thinking of? Fr. Dulles attributes to him an extraordinarily high ambition for his philosophical work. Some people may think that it is an unreasonable ambition—I think so myself. But some people aim high, and I don't blame Anselm for that. But to think that he had succeeded in achieving that aim? How could Anselm possibly have come to believe that?

Is it possible that Anselm never met a Jew or a pagan face to face? Even so, did he never speak to a missionary, just returned from somewhere on the edge of Christendom, who could tell him of the success of his arguments in compelling Jews and pagans to assent to the Incarnation? How could Anselm have failed to see that his arguments came nowhere close to having the effect that his high ambition proposed for them?

If we Christian philosophers do not try to formulate at least a moderately clear idea of just what we are trying to do, then it is unlikely that we will accomplish anything worthwhile (except, of course, by accident). And if we do not pause now and then to evaluate candidly the success of our efforts, then we are unlikely to improve our endeavor.

George I. Mavrodes
Department of Philosophy
University of Michigan
Ann Arbor, Michigan

When one reflects on the history of the question posed by Avery Dulles, one wonders if the compartmentalization and marginalization of the role of religion with regard to politics is not directly linked to the compartmentalization and marginalization of theology with regard to philosophy. If theological belief is irrelevant to philosophical inquiry, why should religion have any role or bearing on one's political views or actions?

For one who has made the radical decision to believe (as a Christian) and to integrate this belief into thought and action, philosophy—when understood in the broader sense as being the "search for truth about ultimate questions"—not only can be Christian, it can only be Christian.

John W. Chambers, Jr.
Atlanta, Georgia

Avery Dulles replies:

Anselm's principal concern, it would seem, was to satisfy Christian students who wanted to be assured that their faith was not irrational. But Anselm's friend Gilbert Crispin was in contact with learned Jews in London who argued that the Incarnation was absurd because it was unfitting for God to take on human flesh. There are strong reasons for thinking that this debate was one of the incentives for Anselm's *Cur Deus Homo* as well as for Crispin's *Disputation with a Jew*. I see no reason for denying that such literature contributed to the conversion of some Jews and prevented the defection of some Christians.

Anselm did indeed make high, even exorbitant, claims for reason. But he was no common rationalist. He knew that our rational powers, weakened by sin, needed to be cured of their torpor through repentance, prayer, and purification. Whatever the attainments of reason, faith was still required for a right relationship to God.

Anselm's Catholic disciples continued to use arguments from fittingness very effectively in their apologetics, as does Bonaventure, for example, in his *Breviloquium*. They would concede, however, that without benefit of revelation the human mind cannot conclusively establish what it is most fitting for God to do. John Henry Newman, one of the greatest apologists, maintained that "antecedent probabilities," while they could not prove the truth of revelation, could prepare the way to faith.

I agree with Professor Mavrodes that Christian philosophers should be able to formulate what they are trying to do. Their main task is not to convince others but to find truth. In my article I contend that while faith and reason must be in harmony, neither can dispense with, or be absorbed by, the other. Philosophy is embarked on a journey that cannot be completed without faith.

Mr. Chambers and I agree that theological belief is relevant to philosophical inquiry, but it does not follow that all philosophy must be professedly Christian. To hold that philosophy "can only be Christian," as Mr. Chambers does, would be to delete ancients such as Plato and Aristotle and moderns such as Heidegger, Wittgenstein, and Lévinas from the roster of philosophers. It would thus remove what John Paul II calls a valuable "ground for understanding and dialogue with those who do not share our faith." My own philosophy as a Christian believer will inevitably be influenced by my faith and thus be in some sense Christian. But I must recognize that some non-Christians are philosophers, and indeed very good ones. To reject their contribution would impoverish Christian philosophy itself and would exacerbate the very marginalization that Mr. Chambers deplores.

Who Controls the Constitution?

Among the misstatements made in Hadley Arkes' essay on my book *Taking the Constitution Away from the Courts* ("Lincoln, Nietzsche, and the Constitution," April), perhaps the easiest to correct is his assertion that I was a law clerk to Justice Harry Blackmun. The second sentence of my book's preface is: "As a law clerk, I drafted a letter from Justice Thurgood Marshall to Justice Harry Blackmun, which some have thought influenced the structure of Justice Blackmun's final opinion."

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Professor Arkes' inability to read that sentence correctly casts some doubt on his readings of the book's arguments. In particular, I treat as uninteresting the obvious proposition that people not subject to a coercive judicial order (such as the Reagan Administration officials to whom he refers) have no duty to follow the principle of an opinion with which they disagree, although there may be considerations of political prudence that counsel in favor of following it. Indeed, I argue that under some circumstances political officials may properly refuse to comply with a coercive judicial order directed at them. In short, in my view there is more to be said in favor of the more extreme positions asserted in FT's November 1996 symposium on judicial usurpation than most people think, whether they be on the right or on the left.

Mark Tushnet
Georgetown University Law Center
Washington, D.C.

Mark Tushnet's new book, *Taking the Constitution Away from the Courts*, provides support on the left for a Lincolnesque resistance to the Supreme Court in the name of the Constitution. Hadley Arkes rightly urges conservatives to use Professor Tushnet's example to press for restoration of the Constitution's fundamental moral principles, especially the right to life.

Professor Arkes doesn't mention, however, just how widespread the book's point of view is among elite law school faculty today. For example, last fall Vicki Jackson, Tushnet's colleague and collaborator at Georgetown Law School, told me that the legitimacy of resistance to the Supreme Court is today the "majority view." In 1997 this view was strongly criticized in the *Harvard Law Review* (Vol. 110, pp. 1359-87), but the writers there conceded at the outset that most scholars, most officials, and many ordinary citizens believe that even when the Supreme Court has spoken on a constitutional issue, nonjudicial officials have no more obligation to follow its interpretation than the courts have to follow the constitutional interpretations of Congress or the Executive. According to what appears to be the dominant view, nonjudicial officials, in exercising their own constitutional responsibilities, are duty-bound to follow the Constitution as *they* see it. They are not obliged to subjugate their constitutional judgments to what they believe are the mistaken constitutional judgments of others.

Richard Stith
School of Law
Valparaiso University
Valparaiso, Indiana

Hadley Arkes replies:

I am so, so sorry that I sped too quickly over Mark Tushnet's preface, but let me get this straight: Professor Tushnet apparently thought it quite important to convey to his reader, in the first lines of his preface, a) that he had served as a clerk on the Supreme Court, b) that, in the capacity of a clerk, he had written a letter or memorandum to Justice Blackmun on *Roe v. Wade*, and c) that "some have thought [the letter] influenced the structure of Justice Blackmun's final opinion." Now, was there something different here, in function or purpose, from serving as a clerk to Justice Blackmun? If so, it is a refined distinction, and the very purpose of Prof. Tushnet's preface had to be to sweep past it, to tell us that he was tendering advice to Blackmun. If a reader missed that distinction in the trick-of-the-eye, it was a trick that Prof. Tushnet was apparently willing to foster. Friends who have been, shall we say, "close" to the Court have been quite taken with his report: Was Prof. Tushnet invited to submit that letter? Was he in the habit of tendering advice to other Justices at the time?

But Prof. Tushnet treats this "mistake" as a portentous slip, which foretells other, serious misreading, not merely of the preface, but of the body and substance of his book. And yet, he neglects to offer a correction or tell us where I might have gotten it wrong in stating these main lines of his argument: that it is necessary to free the Constitution from the hold of judges and the constraint of the written text; and that judges, political officers, and indeed citizens should be free to appeal to the Declaration of Independence as the ground of first principles to guide our law. But it is not the Declaration as understood by the Founders: not the Declaration built on an understanding of axiomatic or "self-evident" truths, or of rights grounded in a fixed "nature" of human things. And it is especially not the Declaration that invokes the Creator as the source of those truths and "unalienable rights." The Declaration is not to be taken as a source then of permanent things or enduring principles, but of principles that must remain contingent. As Prof. Tushnet himself says, the Declaration would be the source of a "story line," and we must always be free to "start telling a different story about ourselves precisely because we constitute ourselves."

This is a remarkable statement overall, which removes the Declaration and the Constitution from the principles of the Founders and replaces them with the principles of Nietzsche. Now, is that an inaccurate account of the book—or, if it is accurate, does it amount to something that needs some further defense or justification on his part? I find it astounding that, on these matters, going to the heart of his book, he has nothing at all to say. Prof. Tushnet affects to be drawing on Lincoln's understanding of the limits to the authority of the Court, but as I tried to show, it is a truncated understanding, quite radically detached from the moral premises that anchored

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Lincoln's position. That, too, is concealed in the trick-of-the-eye. The performance rather reminds me of George Tyrrell's line about the Jesuits: if they were accused of killing three men and a dog, they would invariably produce the dog alive.

I would like to thank Richard Stith for his note, which rather confirms the new state of affairs reflected in Prof. Tushnet's book. Writers on the left have talked themselves into a truncated (or even corrupted) version of Lincoln's argument, and they feel not the slightest inhibition in using it when it suits their purpose—as, for example, in resisting the decisions that challenge racial entitlements. At the same time, conservatives shy away from invoking Lincoln's understanding and acting upon it, even though that argument remains utterly compelling. Conservatives back away out of a concern that this argument is no longer understood or accepted. In one style of conservatism, they may be following the drift of opinion in calculating what is practicable in our own day. The left doesn't worry about those things; it simply pursues its ends. Thus it ever seems to be. What was that, again, about "the stupid Party"?

Who's Sorry Now?

In "Rethinking the Crusades" (March), Professor Jonathan Riley-Smith asks whether there needs be any apology for the Crusades, noting that no Crusade was ever declared against the Jews and that Christianity has long been in competition with Islam. His amounts to a very partial description of the Crusades, though: they were not a part of an ongoing competition between Christianity and Islam, but an episode in the growing career of self-assertion by Roman Catholicism against Islam and, particularly, against Orthodox Christianity, with which Rome had only recently instigated a permanent schism.

Indeed, Sir Steven Runciman has noted that the Crusades provided the opportunity for the establishment of Roman Catholic bishoprics throughout the Orthodox Christian lands of the Levant that the Roman Catholics conquered. When the Roman Catholics' aggressive wars on Islam failed, the Crusader bishops remained. Robert Louis Wilken, a frequent contributor to FIRST THINGS, tells of visiting a Greek Orthodox monastery in Jerusalem named for a prominent church of Constantinian foundation. Why, Wilken asked, were the monks not housed at the church, which was itself a few hundred yards away? The father responded that the church had been stolen by the Roman Catholics during the Crusades. There are many such churches. If Catholics really regret the Crusades, and if saying so is not just propaganda, they could prove it by returning the loot.

Prof. Riley-Smith's characterization of the Crusades as self-defense by Christianity against Islam fails on another score: it omits completely the story of the Fourth Crusade, which was nothing other than a glorified thieving party. The ancient capital of Constantinople, home of the Roman Empire's seat of government since A.D. 330 (whatever the Carolingians and their captive popes might say), fell to a crusading army in 1204, and then the real fun began: fornicating with harlots on the high altar of the Church's greatest cathedral, stealing the relics of St. John Chrysostom (still in the Vatican, within a few hundred feet of the place where John Paul II "apologized," to this day), etc. In fact, virtually every major saint of the East (St. John of Damascus, St. James, St. John Chrysostom, et al.) had his relics stolen and carried off by "Crusaders." Why, then, should the absence of an anti-Jewish "Crusade" be understood to obviate the need for an apology?

The greatest library of Greek and Roman manuscripts in the world, the greatest collection of illuminated manuscripts ever (now the glory of the Louvre, the Prado, the British Museum, and the Vatican Museum), and the most notable collection of relics ever assembled were all stolen by "religious pilgrims" of the Fourth Crusade. In fact, next time you're in Venice, go look at the facade of St. Mark's; most of what you see came straight from Constantinople in the thirteenth century.

K. R. Constantine Gutzman
Department of History
John Jay College, CUNY
New York, New York

Jonathan Riley-Smith replies:
Professor Gutzman raises an issue to which I drew attention when I touched on the sack of Constantinople in 1204, adding that "it is not so much to the Muslims that we should be thinking of apologizing, but to the Jews and to our fellow Christians." I went on to ask whether we should be apologizing at all, but in framing my arguments with respect to Islam, I obviously left Prof. Gutzman annoyed. I will try to explain to him why I do not believe apologies to the Greeks are appropriate, although I can see why many might feel they are due.

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Prof. Gutzman expresses a bitterness that those of us involved in the subject often come across. No one could possibly deny that a consequence of Crusade conquests was that by 1300 the "Crusader states" left in the Mediterranean region had been seized entirely from fellow Christians. Westerners were now ruling much of Greece, Cyprus, Crete, and the Aegean islands, were calling for Crusades against the Greeks in defense of their settlements, had imposed their own hierarchies, and were demanding the equivalent of uniate status from the indigenous churches. At the same time a series of Crusades were launched in the Baltic region against the Russians. There can be absolutely no doubt that relations with the Orthodox were permanently soured.

I do not think it would be helpful for me to point out, as I could, that bad as the behavior of the Catholics sometimes was, the truth, at least in relation to the papacy, is less highly colored and one-sided than Greeks and Russians believe, and that every one of Prof. Gutzman's points should be modified. More important, I believe, is for us all to recognize that the ecclesiological divide between Catholics and Orthodox, which is quite profound, is not likely to be resolved by a) pretending that it does not exist and that the whole problem is due to "papal aggression" or b) assuming that only one side believed in the past that such differences should be resolved by force. The Orthodox record on the suppression of heresy, for example, is not too different than that of the Catholic—or the Protestant for that matter. And while *Memory and Reconciliation: The Church and the Faults of the Past* (the recently published report of a sub-commission of the International Theological Commission) suggests that, even allowing for different attitudes in the past, the Church should always set an example in admitting its guilt for its faults and that there is no better way of expressing its solidarity with other branches of Christianity than in doing so, it should also be recognized that a public apology can be an escape. To those who most want expressions of regret for crusading it is axiomatic that Christianity is a religion of peace, whereas its history, and even much of its theology, suggest that violence is deeply embedded in it and endemic. So apologizing can entail turning one's back on a problem instead of confronting it.

Finally, Prof. Gutzman seems to believe that the Pope has apologized for the Crusades. He has not. The order of service on March 12, "The Day of Forgiveness," contains no reference to them, whatever the Vatican spin-doctors implied, although there is an expression of contrition for "sins committed in the service of truth." In fact it would have been impossible for the Church to have gone further on this matter than it did. From the twelfth century to the seventeenth the consensus of the teaching of the bishops was that qualified men had a moral obligation to volunteer for crusading. This was reinforced by the support of a succession of men and women universally regarded as saints. From Urban II in 1095 to Innocent XI in 1684 pope after pope wrote or authorized the dispatch of letters, including many general ones, in which the faithful were summoned to crusade, offered spiritual privileges if they responded, and threatened with divine judgment if they did not. Although none of these letters constituted *ex cathedra* statements in the strict sense, they comprise an impressive, coherent, and consistent body of teaching on the theological and ethical value of crusading. Above all, at least six general councils legislated for Crusades and two of them, the Fourth Lateran Council (1215) and the Second Council of Lyons (1274), published the constitutions *Ad liberandam* and *Pro zelo fidei*, which were among the crusading movement's defining documents.

It could be argued, however, that understanding of morals changes over time. The underlying absolutes remain, of course, but their expression can take quite different forms in different ages. With respect to the use of force one could argue that there has been a sea change in ethical values, so that what was in accordance with "faith and morals" eight centuries ago would not be acceptable today. That kind of conclusion, however, was rejected by the present Pope in his encyclical *Veritatis Splendor* (1993), in which he condemned what he called "ethical relativism" and affirmed the consistency of moral values and the abiding truth of natural law.

The dilemma facing the Church, therefore, is clear. If contrition is to be expressed for the principle of crusading, as opposed to abuses committed during Crusades, either the Church can no longer be regarded as a reliable moral teacher or ethics are relative. Both conclusions are unacceptable, which is why no "apology" for the Crusades will ever be forthcoming and Prof. Gutzman will never be satisfied.

Sin and Grace

I was dismayed to read Dian Saderup Monson's "Believing in the Word" (April). I have not read the original story by Andre Dubus upon which Ms. Monson bases her commentary, but from her summary I learn that a man is told by his daughter that after a night of drinking with some friends, she accidentally ran over a person with her car and left him in the road. Her father goes to the scene and finds the young man still alive. He does not call for help, however, because he wishes to spare his daughter the pain of the ordeal she would have to go through should the incident be reported to the authorities.

In Ms. Monson's reading, "the tender, passionate protection [the father] grants his daughter—the grace—is like unto that mysterious

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grace the Christian God grants us all. God's love, the story implies, undermines His law, defies rationality, and redeems humankind even as it sets the universe, in some awful and awesome sense, a-kilter."

To which I can only say, What? How hideous! Letting a young man die in a ditch when he might be saved or at least comforted by last rites in order that an irresponsible woman be spared the consequences of her own actions is no act of "grace," or "tender, passionate protection." It's evil and monstrous and horrendously selfish.

I don't understand where the idea is coming from about God's undermining His own law and defying rationality. He is law, He is principle. In some theological interpretations, Jesus' sacrifice was precisely for the purpose of satisfying divine justice. But of course Jesus went willingly to his own death to give others the opportunity for redemption from their sins. He didn't let someone die in a ditch in order to protect some other person from having to face the consequences of her misdeeds. I think it's time to put the Judeo back into Judeo-Christian.

Carol Iannone
New York, New York

Dian Saderup Monson replies:
Perhaps due to weaknesses in my account, Ms. Iannone misunderstands both my critique and Dubus' story, which I urge her to read. One misunderstanding concerns the events in "A Father's Story": the father does not intentionally leave a person to die in a ditch; rather, the father's sin lies in failing to call an ambulance to meet him at the scene of the accident. Instead the father merely prays that the man—if it is a man and not, as he hopes, an animal—will live. But it is a man, who dies within moments of the father's arrival. This is not quite as hideous as abandoning a mortally injured man, but certainly it is terribly wrong.

The more fundamental misunderstanding concerns the moral and thematic center of the story, which is not the propriety of the father's behavior. The heart of this story lies in the father's tragically heightened insight into the character of the love God has for him. The parallel between Dubus' father and God the Father is inexact but nevertheless illustrative: mortal love drives the father in the story to shield his daughter from the earthly consequences of her sin; Divine love moves our Heavenly Father to shield us from the eternal spiritual consequences of our sins, if we will believe in Him. Dubus' story does not explore belief; it stops with freely bestowed pardon.

Do I condone the father's actions in "A Father's Story"? No, they were deeply sinful. Nor is there any evidence in the story that Dubus himself approved those actions or intended his readers to do so. But do I understand and sympathize with what the father does? Because of Dubus' skill in rendering believable human characters in a tangibly fallen world, I do. Through the lens of Dubus' fictional world I also glimpse a larger, different world, a world charged with the greatest mystery of all: God's astounding love for His wayward creatures.

The Privilege of Science

In Barry Harvey's article "The Democratization of Science" (March), I found an utterly false claim concerning Western intellectual history embedded in the sentence, "Some scientists, however, rightly suspect that engaging in such dialogue [about the authority of science] means surrendering the epistemic privilege which the Enlightenment uncritically accorded their disciplines and discourses."

The claim I reject is that modern science was ever "uncritically accorded" any such privilege. The authority and prestige it has come to enjoy have been earned, over several centuries, by a record of practical success that is so powerful that it has profoundly transformed the material conditions under which most of mankind lives. The human population of this planet during this time has gone from a few hundred million to the six-billion-plus that it is today, and it has become something of a platitude that the poor of the developed countries now enjoy a level of material comfort and well-being unknown to the kings of earlier periods.

Earlier in his essay, Mr. Harvey refers to "instrumental modes of rationality cultivated by the Enlightenment." Science is just such an "instrumental mode." The claims of *genuine* modern science are all "instrumental" claims, in the sense that they are all subject to modification or rejection on the basis of new experimental evidence, and by the empirical observation of anomalies. It is "junk science," or pseudoscience, that makes claims which transcend the instrumental, and which cannot be verified by any possible empirical observations.

Mr. Harvey's general fear for science seems to be that of "every young farmer, tradesman, and professional choosing for himself which beliefs to accord the exalted title of 'science.'" And it would be understandable if he felt, as this seems to imply, that this would mean an awful lot of public confidence being misplaced in pseudoscience.

But it is the "instrumental" nature of the "mode of rationality" represented by genuine science that provides the necessary correction to this tendency. The method of experimental verification of all hypotheses forms the core of this "mode," and it is precisely here that pseudoscience fails. This is also why genuine science has practical success, where pseudoscience does not, and this in turn forms the basis for any "epistemic privilege" that science may have earned.

Over the long run, popular judgments as to which beliefs deserve

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"the exalted title of science" will hinge on the practical results obtained from such beliefs—on whether they continue to transform the material conditions of our lives. It was this record of practical success that earned for science its present place in our lives to begin with, and it will be the continuation of such a record that will continue to earn for it whatever "exalted" title it may enjoy. This is the full historical meaning of the epistemic shift that has occurred since the Enlightenment: our expectations for *all* our "modes of rationality" have changed.

It is changes like these that form the narrative of Western intellectual history, and such history, like all history, is driven by man's desire to flourish and to control his material world. Mr. Harvey may regret that older and noninstrumental "modes of rationality" have been eclipsed by this process, but history—even intellectual history!—happens, whether we want it to or not.

Edmund Weinmann
Huntington, New York

Barry Harvey replies:
I am frankly surprised that someone can write so glibly about science and progress in light of the past century of brutality and violence, much of which would have been unimaginable apart from "practical results" of the science Mr. Weinmann extolls. It is morally suspect to give credit to science for all the marvelous gadgets that provide us with "a level of material comfort and well-being unknown to the kings of earlier periods" while at the same time neglecting to assign to that same enterprise its share of responsibility for Auschwitz and Hiroshima, not to mention all those wonderful technologies that allow us to dispose of those who inconvenience us so, e.g., the unborn and the infirm.

The intellectual history of the past three hundred years confirms that epistemic privileges were accorded uncritically to the various disciplines and discourses of science during the Enlightenment and its aftermath. During this time it was commonly believed that all truth, goodness, and beauty could be discerned solely through "science." One would hope that we would have learned by now that the ability to build high-definition television sets and thermonuclear weapons does not necessarily provide the members of our society with the means and media to flourish.

Finally, Mr. Weinmann seems to think that I do not wish to distinguish between "genuine science" and "pseudoscience," which is amazing since that was the burden of my article. Unfortunately he has yet to realize that the "practical success" proffered by science does not give us the ability to make such a distinction. The practical success that we have achieved through *scientia* since the seventeenth century has been financed with moral and intellectual capital that we borrowed from the *prudentia* of our Jewish and Christian forebears, but which we have not repaid. I fear that the note is shortly coming due.

What We Mean by Culture

J. L. A. Garcia's review of Adam Kuper's *Culture: The Anthropologists' Account* (March) left me wondering if either Kuper or Professor Garcia recognizes that the use of the term *culture* by anthropologists and other social scientists is in the final analysis the employment of what philosophers of science term a hypothetical construct.

Thus, scientists employing the construct "culture" are not attempting to find out what culture really is. Instead they are employing a hypothetical construct in the hope of better understanding social phenomena—which have empirical referents. It is the law of parsimony that determines the usefulness of the construct. Thus, if we can better understand, predict, and control social phenomena by employing the hypothetical construct "culture" than we can without using it, that is sufficient scientific justification for doing so.

Frank D. Tikalsky
Los Alamos National Laboratory
Los Alamos, New Mexico

I knew J. L. A. Garcia's review of Adam Kuper's book on culture would be problematic after reading the first sentence. Very few anthropologists, Christian or not, conflate moral relativism and cultural relativism, as Professor Garcia does. In fact, the distinction between the two is usually covered early in Anthropology 101. I applaud Prof. Garcia's desire to add a normative element to culture, but by seemingly denying that cultures can be relative at all, he risks an ethnocentrism that does not properly distinguish between those practices that are truly cultural and relative (e.g., food preferences) and those that indeed involve matters of moral judgment (e.g., treatment of individuals). Our critical faculties ought to be used only in situations that truly involve moral judgment, and not to posit some universal culture.

Michael Jindra
Anthropology Department
Bethany Lutheran College
Mankato, Minnesota

J. L. A. Garcia replies:
Three points:

1) It's doubtful that "anthropologists and other social scientists" all use the term "culture" the same way, as Dr. Tikalsky implies. True, talk of "construction" is trendy nowadays, and not all of it is babble. Still, even if all social scientists could be induced to accept the verbal formula "culture is a hypothetical construction," their unanimity would likely be specious. For there is no general agreement on what something is when it is a hypothetical construct.

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2) I cannot speak for Professor Kuper but, yes, I presupposed that there might be such a thing as culture (perhaps even such things as *a* culture and diverse cultures) when I wrote. That assumption is what makes these topics most interesting, because it is only if culture is real that the strong claims made for it—for example, that it accounts for human behavior, incorporates all morality, gives meaning to our existence—can be literally true.

3) However, suppose culture is simply a hypothetical construct, as Dr. Tikalsky thinks (and as he thinks all his colleagues also think). There would still remain questions parallel to the ones that Kuper treats and I raise, especially the question of how best to conceive of culture. Of course, the standard would change: the best way of conceiving culture would no longer be the one that is closest to the truth, but the one that, say, accommodates (with fewest or least significant drawbacks) the simplest, most comprehensive, fruitful, and illuminating theory. So I cannot see how considering culture a hypothetical construct, if that could be made clear, obviates the questions or answers that Kuper's book and my remarks both explore.

When I affirmed that moral relativism, as the term is used these days, is a form of cultural relativism, I meant simply that both its advocates and opponents have in mind the thesis that all or most of morality is somehow relative to culture. The term could be used more broadly. A divine command theorist, for example, thinks that moral obligations vary across times (say, before and after Sinai), across persons (if God commands different things of different individuals or groups), and across possibilities. So, he thinks morality is fundamentally relative to *something*. However, people today are not talking about that sort of position when they discuss moral relativism. They are talking about whether morality is relative to *culture* in some way. My claim that moral relativism, as we now discuss it, is a form of cultural relativism neither entails, nor lends any support to, the very different claim that all cultural relativism is a form of moral relativism.

Where Prof. Jindra says food preference is "cultural and relative," I think it clearer to say that it differs from one population group and its customs to another, and that this difference is likely to be greater and deeper than that found within a given group and body of customs. Even with respect to differences of preference in food, clothing, etc., it may be that some options work better for people in general than others do, and that some are morally problematic. So I don't think we have to be quite so distanced from our critical faculties when considering such matters. Still, I agree with Prof. Jindra that someone who gets on his moral high horse over most differences in taste and manners is, at best, being silly. At worst, he strays into moral vice and a theological heterodoxy that degrades religious and ethical life by treating it as a mere part of some (usually European) culture, from which it supposedly cannot be extricated.

Homophobia and Christian Ethics

Richard John Neuhaus (While We're At It, March) endorses the argument that blaming violent homophobia in America on a misunderstanding of Christian ethics is similar to the invalid "gay panic" defense employed by the homophobic killers of Matthew Shepard.

There's no contradiction in repudiating both homophobes and the moral misunderstanding. In Babylon is found the blood of all victims of violence (Revelation 18:24). "Babylon" symbolizes misunderstanding of Scripture. In the Old Testament, the same Hebrew word means "Babylon" and "Babel" (literally, "gate of God"). In the confusion of tongues, "Babylon" is the Greek transliteration of "Babel."

Our moral confusion stems from an old-wineskins-for-new-wine reading of the New Testament. In 1 Corinthians 6:9, Paul specifically condemned catamites and sodomites —i.e., male prostitutes/slaves and their male patrons/owners—not homosexuals in love. In those days, historians agree, homosexuality as a lifestyle likely did not exist; there was just same-sex buying and selling.

True, in Romans 1, Paul observed that male homosexual desire is contrary to the "natural use" of woman, indicating concern with the lack of human reproduction—the root Greek word *physis* meaning not only "nature" but also "reproduction," and *chresis* ("use") akin to *euchrestos* or "profitable." We know, however, that sex is much more than reproduction. Primarily, sex is a language of love, and love, of course, is an end in itself.

Paul never condemned nonreproductive sex. He was concerned with casual and/or addictive sex, with "worshiping the creature more than the Creator." Becoming addicted to casual sex—burning with lust—is to receive a "meet" recompense for the error of not loving one's neighbor (or bedfellow) as oneself. Yet to love one's neighbor or mate as oneself is, as a rule, to love and worship God.

Blanket condemnation of homosexuality, like its opposite, blanket approval ("anything goes"), fosters two kinds of barbaric Gog and Magog hordes that blot our land: violent homophobes and reckless disease-spreading (and/or violent)

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homosexual sexual predators. Both kinds of beasts will remain with us—unless we become as little children. As Father Neuhaus ("'Father, Forgive Them,'" same issue) explains this becoming: "Unless we are stripped of our habits of forgetting, of our skillful making of excuses, of our jaded acceptance of a world in which bad things happen and it doesn't matter."

A little child, moreover, has a "generous eye" that sees the good in others—not a stingy, mote-seeing eye that envies others' goodness (Matthew 6:22-23, 7:3, 20:15). So here humility, the beginning of wisdom, should begin with Church doctrine that homosexual love doesn't matter—or doesn't even exist.

Mark B. Peterson
Charlottesville, Virginia

RJN replies:
I quoted Keith Pavlischek, who deplored the misuse of both "homophobia" and "gay panic" in the public polemics surrounding these questions. I agree with him. As to what "historians" agree on, see, for instance, Robin Darling Young's review of John Boswell's *Same-Sex Unions in Premodern Europe* (FT, November 1994). Professor Young's argument, with which I also agree, is sharply at odds with the claim of Mr. Peterson and gay apologists in the academy. As for whether sexual activity is "a language of love," that can be the case within the bond of marriage between a man and a woman. The apotheosis of sexual relations, including homogenital acts, as "an end in itself," however, is a form of idolatry. As St. Paul wrote to the Romans.

Siege Mentality?

Richard John Neuhaus professes amazement at the internalization by Roman Catholic academics of anti-Catholic stereotypes, and specifically targets Father James Heft, Chancellor of the University of Dayton (While We're at It, April). I am less amazed by that phenomenon—when I see it, which I don't in this case—than I am by the persistent and bitter divisiveness with which some Catholics insist on framing the issue of the identity of Catholic colleges and universities and the tasks it presents to us.

Far from being an "opponent of the bishops' efforts to implement *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*," Fr. Heft has worked for years to assure its effective implementation. To accuse him—on, apparently, no evidence—of doing otherwise, or of "pandering," or of being somehow like Paul Blanshard, is to be unscholarly, uncharitable, and historically tone-deaf.

Catholic higher education can and should contribute to the pluralism of American higher education. It should not, however, do so as though Catholic universities were only bunkers from which we fend off the sieges of modernity. The secular academy is not the enemy; its members (many of them Catholic, as are many of their students) are our collaborators in the sacred work of understanding the world. Those who engage in the hard work of deepening that collaboration and healing the divisions brought on by centuries of separation between faith and reason should be admired and imitated, not publicly insulted.

Una M. Cadegan
Associate Professor of History
University of Dayton
Dayton, Ohio

Priests With AIDS

Richard John Neuhaus has a brief item (While We're at It, April) mentioning our recent series in the *Kansas City Star* on AIDS in the priesthood.

Unfortunately, Father Neuhaus referred to criticism of the series but did not seek to rebut those accusations by checking the series itself. The result is that he has, perhaps unwittingly, perpetuated a series of falsehoods about our articles that have been spread, loudly and repeatedly, by critics such as the Catholic League.

Based on estimates from the country's leading authorities in this area and separate checks by the *Kansas City Star* of death records around the country, we stated that priests apparently are dying of AIDS at a rate four times the general population—not that they have AIDS at that rate, as the article states. We also compared the death rate to other adult males (roughly twice the rate), a comparison our critics either ignore or falsely accuse us of not making. And finally, and most importantly, our survey of priests in no way led to our estimates on death rates. The two matters are completely separate and anyone who read our series as it appeared in the *Star* would see that immediately. The entire series is available online at www.kcstar.com/projects/priests.

I do appreciate, however, that Fr. Neuhaus realizes that AIDS in the priesthood is an "undeniably sobering" problem. Far from sensationalizing this issue, our series tells the human tragedy of this dilemma in the stories and words of the priests themselves. Our stories were both compassionate and accurate. It is a difficult message, to be sure, and the attack on the messenger has been persistent and intense. Nevertheless, I am heartened that scores of priests have told us that they believe our series will help the Church address this issue.

Mark Zieman
Editor and Vice President
Kansas City Star
Kansas City, Missouri

RJN replies:
It may be that a series of falsehoods have been perpetuated, but I do not think we or the critics of the *Kansas City Star* are responsible for that. In its series and the selling of the series

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to other media, the *Star* did highlight its claim of priests dying at four times the rate of the general population. That qualifies, I believe, as "sensationalizing the issue," and is the more deplorable because it is not supported by the facts. Mr. Zieman is correct about the distinction between having AIDS and dying of the disease, and also about the difference between the survey of priests and the other sources on which the paper relied for its estimates. The most thorough critique of the *Star* series was done by the Center for Media and Public Affairs (CMPA) and Statistical Assessment Service (STATS). The latter raises detailed methodological challenges to the *Star* stories, and especially to sources mentioned by the *Star* who offer "guesstimates" that 300, 500, or even 1,000 priests have died of AIDS. In addition to its methodological criticisms, STATS says this: "Out of a sample of 3,013 selected to receive the questionnaire, the *Star* received a total of four responses from priests who said that they definitely had AIDS. If we simply scale up this result from four priests as though it were a representative sample projected onto 46,000 priests, the result is roughly sixty priests, nationwide, who would have AIDS and know it. Now, that's not a measure of death from AIDS in a single year, but if sixty priests today have AIDS, and if we can further presume that the rate of death from AIDS is going down among priests just as it is in the general population, and if we can further judge that all sixty priests with AIDS today are not likely to die during a single year, we should quickly realize that while sixty priests who will someday die of AIDS is a tragedy, it is also nowhere near 1,000 priests with AIDS, nor even 500. For that matter, it is not 300 either." What everyone should be able to agree on is that, whatever the number, priests dying of AIDS is an undeniably serious problem. (For the STATS critique of the *Star* report, see www.stats.org/newsletters/0003/kcstar.html.)

Heavenward

Our ship stands off the coast. From where we lie,
The moss-green hills resemble what we've lost:
Sweet plenty, peace, a smiling sky,
A life in moments, no regrets,
No yearning for unreachable not yets.

But then we shoot the surf and make the land,
And then begin our days of heat and frost,
The insects, shirkers, boredom, sand.
Anticipation never gave
The view it framed beneath its architrave.

We wait, we hope, imagine what's to come,
Beg something like true home once we have crossed
To Love, to where all lines are plumb.
Reality, however, fails.
We leave our dreams to see a world that pales.

And You, my Lord, who know our thwarts and balks,
Who met them and Yourself paid out the cost,
Still call us with the preacher's talks
Toward landfall that outshines his words
As tended gardens do the scat of birds.

John Brugaletta

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This Time

Life in the Little Apple

James Nuechterlein

My wife and I have a commuter marriage: she lives and works in Valparaiso, Indiana, and I do the same in New York City. We fly back and forth as often as we can (without us United Airlines would be in big trouble). My trips to Indiana confront me on a regular basis with the disparities between life in Manhattan and in the small town midwest. Those disparities are not so obvious in nature as you might think.

They are also, for me at least, not all that jarring. Valparaiso was home to me for several years, and within hours (if that) of returning there it is home again—even as, on getting back to New York, I am at once entirely at home there. My wife says I'm a chameleon, and I don't think she means that wholly as a compliment.

I know my son doesn't. He worries about my character. He can't understand, for example, my attitude toward sports. I grew up in Detroit and rooted for the Tigers. When I lived in Valparaiso, fifty miles from Chicago, I rooted for the Cubs and (to a considerably lesser extent) for the White Sox. Now, in New York, I root for the Mets and (yes, I confess it) even for the Yanks. This seems to me healthy adjustment to local circumstances. To my son it indicates inconstancy. I tell him that the difference between our generations is that his may be faithful to athletic teams but is faithless to spouses, while mine, its loves more properly ordered, is the reverse.

Still, for all my ease in adjusting to life wherever I am, I cannot be oblivious to the differences between Valparaiso (pop. 25,000) and Manhattan. Valparaiso is, in many ways, quintessential small town America. There's a town square with a courthouse. The downtown has pleasant shops with friendly proprietors, and the tree-shaded streets that surround it are dotted with comfortable homes on uncrowded lots. It's a college town, which saves it from being provincial, but it is hardly multicultural. There are few Jews, even fewer blacks or Hispanics. Crime rates are higher than they used to be, but lots of people still don't lock their doors. Churches are everywhere and they're full on Sunday morning. People get genuinely excited about the fate of the high school athletic teams, especially—it is after all Indiana—the basketball team. The politics of the town are generally Republican, although for the past decade a distinctly moderate Democratic mayor has retained office because—and this fits the small town pattern—people like and trust him. I could go on, but you get the picture.

Nothing in that picture applies to Manhattan. (Well, there are lots of churches, but, the Catholic ones aside, few of them are full on Sunday morning.) The routines of life, like the landscape, could hardly be more different, and the same holds for the people. It's not just demographic patterns. Manhattan is filled with Type A personalities, and they generate a manic excitement and anxiety appropriate to their ambitions. As a friend of mine from Valparaiso said on return from a year's sabbatical in New York, "It takes a lot of energy just to stand on a street corner in Manhattan." The difference between Valparaiso and New York is the difference, in literary shorthand, between *Main Street* and *The Bonfire of the Vanities.*

And yet, scarcely beneath the surface, things are not nearly so simple. Valparaiso, to begin there, has a feel these days that is more suburban than small town. Indeed, real estate flyers now refer to it as "Chicago's newest eastern suburb." Every time I go back, there's a new subdivision going up. The downtown is still picturesque, but much of the time it's also empty; people do their shopping at one of the new malls that have taken over the farmland around the ever expanding city limits. You can tell it's a suburb because people hardly ever walk anywhere, except occasionally for exercise. Cars don't yet dominate life the way they do in, say, Los Angeles, but that's the direction things seem to be going.

In Manhattan, by contrast, people walk—I walk—everywhere. I don't keep a car here—only the very rich, the very stupid, or those who commute elsewhere to work do that—so transportation is either by subway, cab, or on foot, and it's mostly the latter. I even walk to work. I'd guess the average Manhattanite does more walking than he would if he lived virtually anywhere else in the country. More importantly, he walks *in his neighborhood.* That's the thing: midtown partially aside, Manhattan is a collection of neighborhoods, and, peculiar as it seems to non-New Yorkers, those so inclined can know in their neighborhood an experience of community available to relatively few people elsewhere in the nation.

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I live in Stuyvesant, the neighborhood adjacent to the East River between 14th and 23rd Streets. I do all my shopping, with very few exceptions, at small stores within a six-block radius of my apartment. I've been to Macy's a handful of times in ten years, and other than that have never—except when in Valparaiso—set foot in a department store, or anything like a shopping mall. The local supermarket is ludicrously small compared to those you find anywhere outside Manhattan, and even it now feels too large and impersonal for me. I buy most of my food at the deli on the corner. They know me there. And every Saturday, when I go to brunch at the little place around the corner, it's right out of *Cheers*—the waitress greets me by name and the bartender, without waiting to ask, starts mixing my Beefeater martini. That never happened in Valparaiso.

Even my churchgoing experience doesn't fit the small town/big city contrast you might expect. Immanuel Lutheran, the Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod congregation I attend in Valparaiso, is one of the larger LCMS parishes in the country, with a membership in the thousands and a budget in the millions. It's a friendly congregation, and the pastors work hard at avoiding a megachurch atmosphere, but, when I was a member there, there were inevitably an awful lot of people I didn't know.

At Christ Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America parish I belong to in Manhattan (it's across the street and down a few doors), I know everybody. It would be hard not to—if there are more than forty-five of us there on any given Sunday it's a banner attendance. Not only do we all know each other, we regularly run into each other on the street during the week. (I tell my wife she'll never have to worry about me carrying on an affair; given the goldfish bowl conditions of my life, I couldn't get away with it.) I've never felt more attached to a congregation in my life.

So there it is. My wife and I have agreed that when we retire we will again live together in Valparaiso. I look forward to that, and I have no doubt that my adjustment to life there will be quick and uncomplicated. But it won't, I know, be pain free. It will be Garrison Keillor in reverse, and there will be—I feel the pangs already—those moments of bittersweet nostalgia when I recall, with a longing almost palpable, the small town life I left behind in Manhattan. FT

Edward Shils in Heaven

Dear Edward, sleepless, lonely, I think of you tonight
In Heaven, out for a leisurely stroll, yet ready for a fight.
Before illogic, false sentiment, sophistry you could never bend,
Now five years dead, why change, allow mere Heaven to forfend?
Master of blistering tirade, scorching academic cant,
Skewering intellectual charade with terrifying rant.
You were the best of haters and for the best of reasons,
Blasting all the virtuous clerks and all their little treasons.
A lover of courage, Dickens, Dunhill's ink in deepest green,
Useful shops, dark thick soups, competence, spiced-up aubergine.
Has Heaven food fiery and rich enough for your ample need?
Are there good books and journals in the place for you to read?
Have you discovered an angel with your gift for repartee?
Did you abandon salty Yiddish, shift to Quaker thou and thee?
Pious agnostic, I cannot picture you sitting at God's knee.
Sweet curmudgeon, do you ever think of me?

Joseph Epstein

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Opinion

Seminary Sanity

Sarah E. Hinlicky

When you start out at seminary with an eye toward entering the ministry, the first thing they want to know about you is not whether you believe in God, or pray, or go to church. The first thing they want to know is whether you are a loony-toon. And so, in a move that may or may not make sense, they bustle you off to a psychological evaluation to find out.

This is mildly irritating to someone like me who believes in God, prays, goes to church, and wonders how much sanity has to do with any of it. For the record—and for those who place great import on childhood baggage—I a) get plenty of positive attention from my dad, b) approve of my mom's taste in clothes, and c) adore my one brother whose only flaw is having learned to play on me all the tricks I played on him when he was smaller than me. But my well-adjusted smile was not enough to convince the People In Charge that I was too healthy to spend an hour in a shrink's office. Instead, I got a whole day there. Before that, though, I had to take a whole battery of tests.

If I wasn't tending toward loony-toonity beforehand, the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory was nearly enough to trigger it. There is something ethically fishy about that test. The MMPI is approximately 567 true-or-false statements that, in their effort to detect whether one suffers from paranoia or hysteria, effectively induce those very conditions. Here are some sample statements (drawn from memory, since the MMPI is kept safely out of the hands of civilians like me):

I vomit a lot.
I have a terrible fear of rats.
Sometimes I think someone's out to get me.
I am possessed by evil spirits.
I enjoy being hurt by those I love.

I am pleased to report that I quickly answered false to all of these. (Besides, if I really were possessed by evil spirits, do you suppose they'd tell me so?) But the one that really got me was: I am fascinated by fire. It all revolved around the interpretation of the word "fascinated." Sure, in one sense, I'm fascinated by fire—isn't everybody?—but if I answered "true," they'd probably think I was a pyro. The candidacy committee would have visions of the headline news announcer saying, "Last night a local pastor allegedly charged through the town center wielding a lit paschal candle like a lance and crying, 'Fiery death to the infidels!'" and that would be the end of my vocational prospects. It took me a solid ten minutes to talk myself into lying (a very unministerial thing to do, alas), reasoning that I'd rather commit a venial sin than lose my chances over a stupid psych exam.

The other tests were a walk in the park by comparison. Everybody loves the Myers-Briggs because it reports no negative information on the test-taker, just preferences toward one style of operation over another. I personally hated the Thinking/Feeling questions that make you choose between "head" and "heart" because I think it's a false dichotomy and the source of all Western philosophical ills; however, that probably proves I'm a Thinker beyond any shadow of a doubt. The Campbell interest survey ranks your skills and interests to help you figure out a suitable career. (The fact that I was taking this test while in direct pursuit of a chosen career is, apparently, a matter of indifference to the People In Charge.) You just tick off your level of interest in various occupations like tax consultant, Mary Kay vendor, botanist, or fireman. Later they tell you what you told them. It gets high marks for accuracy.

More creative are the "sentence completions." They give you an opening phrase, and you take it wherever you want to. So you get about forty totally open-ended possibilities like these:

I like it when . . .
Sometimes I wonder . . .
I wish that . . .
Sea anemonae remind me . . . (Just kidding. Nothing that suggestive here.)
My favorite memory . . .
I often think . . .
Fire-swallowers at the circus make me feel . . .
I used to . . .

The potential for sarcasm here is truly awesome. I mostly restrained myself, again for fear of headline news fantasies, but after so much soulful introspection I just couldn't take it anymore: When I stop . . . breathing, I turn blue. ("This just in! A local pastor has been hospitalized after a series of self-induced fainting spells.") There was a vocabulary/deductive reasoning test too, but as that was basically objective, there's not much in it worthy of comment.

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All that, of course, was just preliminary. The real excitement came on Evaluation Day itself. The plan was to spend the morning with the master's-level counselor and the afternoon with the Ph.D.-level counselor, all for the bargain price of $600. I must admit, though, that there are worse things in this world than spending an entire day talking about myself to utterly rapt strangers. It was fun to diagnose and dissect myself as if I weren't even there in the room, saying with absolute authority, "Oh yes, this is just like me," or "Oh no, I would never act like that." Parts of it were fairly enlightening. Other parts were not.

Take, for instance, the chat about my Myers-Briggs profile (ENTP, for the record). The very kind and likable lady who counseled me explained that like most ministerial sorts, I was a strong N (intuitive/abstract thinking), whereas most laypeople are S's (sensory/practical thinking). "So you mean," I said slowly, trying to take it all in, "that I, as the pastor, will be more interested in theology than the church council, whose main goals will be meeting the monthly expenses, arranging to have the boiler repaired, and organizing a potluck now and then?" Well, gosh. The lady went on to express her concern that I had low self-esteem. I opined that there must be an error in the tests, but she showed me on the little chart that I consistently rated my interest in my favorite areas (religion, teaching, philosophy, etc.) higher than my skills. Therefore I must be underrating myself. It's hard to argue with that kind of reasoning, so I didn't.

Don't get me wrong—the morning was by no means wasted. I discovered, to my great relief, that even in this day and age a little theology goes a long way, even where psych evaluators are concerned. Luckily for me, the nice lady was also a "diaconal minister," the phrase my church uses because for some reason it can't bring itself to say "deacon," so she was excited by any evidence of orthodoxy. My first indication of this was after her speech about how my inner sense of call was sacrosanct, and her intention was not to threaten or question it in any way; she just needed to determine whether I'd make a good match with the kind of people the synod was looking for. After a moment of respectful silence, I said, "Actually, I don't think there's anything sacrosanct about my sense of call. I could be wrong. The church is supposed to discern whether the Holy Spirit is calling me to ordination, so I'm happy to leave the decision in their hands." She looked at me in genuine astonishment. "Oh, how wonderful!" she exclaimed. "You just can't guess how many people walk in here and demand that we give them full rein in the church as if they were the only ones who counted in the process." I thought I probably could guess if I tried.

The next time theology saved the day, it was a narrower escape. We had been reviewing my interest survey. The nice lady and her assistant confronted me, in a very sweet and loving manner, with the fact that I had not rated counseling very highly on my interest list. (I began to squirm.) In fact, according to the test, I seemed to have almost no desire to help people at all. Did I realize, she whispered, that according to the statistics most pastors rate higher in interest in the helping professions? Did I really have no interest in being a therapist, psychiatrist, health care professional? Isn't that why people go into the ministry? At last I bit the bullet and said, "I don't believe that I can help people." Audible gasp. "I believe that Jesus Christ can help people, and my job is to lead them to him and his healing." Contented sighs. The lady was beaming again, and she thanked me. At that point even I couldn't help but like her, despite my firm resolve to be suspicious of her ilk. By the end of the morning, our common appreciation of solid doctrine made me feel like we'd spent an evening chatting in front of a cozy fire instead of under the glare of the fluorescent lights.

Unfortunately, the treatment wasn't over yet. I still had to see the doctor. My McDonald's lunch was sitting none too well in my insides as I pondered what sort of horrible secrets he would try to get me to blurt out. When I finally sat down in his office and introduced myself, I felt myself blushing fiercely—and immediately panicked at how he would interpret it. Maybe he'd think I was hiding something. Worse yet, maybe he'd think I had a crush on him.

"Hi," he said. "How was your morning?"

"Fine! It was fine," I replied quickly. Why did he ask? Was he going to tell the nice lady what I said about her?

"Good," he said blandly as he started rustling papers around. "All we have to do is look over the results of your MMPI."

The MMPI! My old nemesis was back. I tried to focus while he explained in a monotone about the threshold line on the charts, which means, in lay terms, that as long as you're below it, you're not a psycho.

"But I'm over the line on that one," I said, pointing to the column labeled Bizarre Mentation. "What does that mean?"

"Oh, that," said the doctor dully, waving it away like a fly with his hand. "Don't worry about it. All religious people score high on that one." He went on to explain that if you mark "true" for statements like "I believe there is an afterlife" or "I think angels exist," the test chalks it up to potential mental illness. I didn't know whether to be insulted or strangely comforted; either way, the doctor didn't care and proceeded with the results.

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After droning on for a while, lulling me into a false sense of security, he asked me, "So, did you have a happy childhood?"

It was too quick and sudden, the sneaky jerk. I wasn't prepared for the question and he knew it. I almost just said yes. But I caught myself in time, looked him square in the eye, and said, "I had such a happy childhood that I've never even been to a psychologist. I don't expect you to believe me, though. I'm sure if I said so you'd think I was hiding nasty secrets or something."

"I'll believe whatever you tell me," he said calmly.

"I had a happy childhood," I said defiantly.

"Great," he said, and started to pack things up. "We're all through here. Do you have any questions or comments before we quit?"

I thought a moment. I looked at him. And I blurted out, "I lied on the fire question!"

Sarah E. Hinlicky, *a former Editorial Assistant at* First Things, *is a student at Princeton Theological Seminary.*

Rights, Animal and Human

David R. Carlin

Last year Harvard Law School offered its first-ever course on animal rights. This is good news for animal rights advocates, since Harvard is one of the two or three top law schools in the nation. If Harvard is on board for animal rights, can the Supreme Court be far behind?

Currently, American law gives animals *protection* in a wide variety of circumstances, but it affords them no *rights.* The prevailing legal principle is that only persons can be bearers of rights. So, before animals can have rights, either that principle will have to be changed, or it will have to be shown that animals (at least some of them) are persons.

The animal rights movement (of which Peter Singer, the controversial Princeton professor, is the philosophical guru) contends that there should be only a relatively narrow legal gap between humans and animals. Biologically speaking, of course, there *is* only a narrow gap between humans and the highest of the animals. But this raises the question: Is a strictly biological account of human nature adequate? The animal rights movement would answer this question in the affirmative; Christianity, by contrast, has always answered it in the negative. At first glance, the animal rights movement seems to be aiming at the elevation of animals. In fact, however, it is but the latest episode in a long history of attempts to degrade humans.

Many individual members of the animal rights movement, I willingly concede, are kindhearted folks who are revolted at cruelty to animals and wish to minimize it; they have no desire to degrade humanity. But historical movements often have objective tendencies that contradict the wishes of their proponents. (Witness communism, which, despite its objective tendency to tyranny and mass murder, had many followers who were humane and philanthropic in intention.) Underlying the push for narrowing the legal gap between humans and animals is the philosophical premise that there is no more than a narrow ontological gap between humans and animals. But the animal rights people are not the first to embrace this premise. Far from it.

In the sixteenth century, Michel de Montaigne, the great French essayist and skeptic, argued that the gap between humans and animals was narrower than most people imagined. He devoted much of his writing to showing that humans are not nearly as rational as we, in our pride, suppose ourselves to be, while occasionally pointing out how surprisingly rational the lower animals could sometimes be. In his most comprehensive and influential essay, "An Apology for Raimond Sebond," Montaigne cited the case of a logical dog, a case reported by an ancient philosopher. The dog was following a scent along a path. Suddenly the single path divided into three. The dog hesitated: Which way to go? He sniffed at one path; no scent. He sniffed at a second; no scent there either. And then, without bothering to give an investigatory sniff at the one remaining, he set off on this third path. Clearly the dog had performed a disjunctive syllogism, saying to himself: "The scent I'm following will be found either on path A, B, or C; it is not found on A or B; it follows, therefore, that it must be on C."

And since, according to the dominant philosophical tradition of Montaigne's day—a tradition that reached back to Plato, Aristotle, and the Stoics—rationality (or a capacity for logical thinking) is the distinctive characteristic of human beings, it was no small thing to show that dogs as well as humans can be logical. In the world of philosophy, it had always been rationality that established the almost infinite ontological gap between humans and animals. Show that rationality is a characteristic shared by both, and humanity's ancient claim to dominance is destroyed.

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Near the middle of the eighteenth century, during the robust early stages of the Enlightenment, a minor French philosophe, Julien Offray de la Mettrie, wrote a book titled *L'Homme Machine.* If humans are nothing more than machines, he argued, albeit very refined and complex ones, then there is certainly no great ontological gap between humans and the lower animals, for they are also machines, though less refined and complex. La Mettrie suggested, for instance, that the reason apes cannot speak is not because of any inferiority in rationality to human beings but because of "some defect in the organs of speech." He believed a young ape could be taught the use of language if we were to instruct it using the (then newly invented) methods used to teach deaf-mutes to "speak." In other words, given the right teacher, apes could be taught sign language.

But to date, the greatest of all attempts to narrow the gap between humans and the lower animals has been Darwinism. Perhaps this should not be said of the Darwinism of Darwin himself, who had little wish, at least in public, to extrapolate his biological findings into the realm of ontology. But it can certainly be said of many of Darwin's epigones, who viewed humans as purely biological entities and thus regarded biology as competent to pronounce the last word on the ontological rank of human nature. Since humans have the same remote ancestry as the rest of the animal kingdom, since we have the same relatively proximate ancestry as the great apes, and since anatomically we bear a strong resemblance to these our "cousins," then it follows (they reasoned) that humans are ontologically only a little bit superior to the lower animals. And if we measure superiority and inferiority in terms of capacity to survive (which is perhaps the true Darwinian way of measuring these things), then we are not superior at all; for it is obvious that all surviving animal species have equally met that test. By that measure, our superiority, if we are indeed superior, will not be shown until we outlast all other animal species; but that is almost certainly impossible, since it is difficult to imagine how humans could survive on earth without the assistance of other simultaneously existing animal species.

Our contemporary animal rights movement is heir to this long tradition of trying to narrow the gap between humans and lower animals. But what motive lies behind this tradition? The answer seems obvious enough. Specifically, the motive is anti-Christian; more generally, it is a strong animosity toward the view of human nature taken both by biblical religions and by the great classical schools of philosophy, especially Platonism and Stoicism. That man is "made in the image and likeness of God" is an expression found in the Bible, but it is a formula that well expresses the anthropology of Plato and the Stoics as well. To reduce human nature to nothing more than its biological status is to attack this ancient and exalted conception of human nature.

In defense of the attackers—from Montaigne, through the philosophes and the Darwinians, to Peter Singer (who once wrote a book titled *Animal Liberation*) and the Harvard Law School—it might be said that their intentions have often been humane. The Stoic-Christian theory of human nature, in their opinion, has been dangerously unrealistic, the product not of empirical observation but of fantastic imagination. By encouraging men and women to believe that their true home is not in this world, the world of nature—that we are potentially divine beings living in temporary exile—this fantastic theory has rendered humans unable to achieve such limited happiness as we might have achieved. Demoting human nature from heaven to earth will, by making us more realistic, render us more successful. Better (in Macaulay's phrase) to own an acre in Middlesex than a county in Utopia.

This defense ("they had good intentions") might have been acceptable prior to the twentieth century. But in the course of that century we had some unpleasant experiences with persons who entertained the purely biological conception of human nature. Hitler was a great believer in this purely biological conception (sometimes with a confused overlay of pagan romanticism). In his way, he can be counted as one of Darwin's epigones. Now, of course, you cannot prove that an idea is wrong simply because Hitler embraced it; for instance, that Hitler favored the production of Volkswagens doesn't prove that they are bad automobiles. But when there is a direct link between one of his major ideas and the Holocaust, as there is in the case of his conception of human nature, this is at least enough to give us pause. At present I cannot *prove* that the idea of animal rights is extraordinarily dangerous and inhumane; to get proof of this, we'll have to wait until the disastrous consequences of the idea reveal themselves over the next century or so. But I strongly suspect that it's a dangerous idea, and accordingly I suspect that the promoters of this idea, whatever their intentions, are enemies of the human race.

David R. Carlin *is Professor of Philosophy and Sociology at the Community College of Rhode Island, as well as chairman of the Democratic Party in Newport, Rhode Island.*

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Remembering Robert Casey

Robert P. George

On the morning of his Commonwealth's 1992 presidential primary, I got a telephone call from Pennsylvania Governor Robert P. Casey, a man whose pro-life record I knew and admired, but whom I had never met. A mutual friend had given him a copy of a talk I had presented to the Catholic bishops criticizing the proposition that one can legitimately be "personally opposed" to abortion while supporting its legal permission and even public funding.

The Governor, intending a compliment (I think), was calling to say that I had demonstrated rigorously what was, to him, hardly in need of formal demonstration, namely, that excluding the unborn from the legal protections against arbitrary killing that the rest of us enjoy is a sin against the principle of equality.

As the Governor saw it, elementary justice demands that all human beings, without regard to age, size, stage of development, or condition of dependency, be accorded the equal protection of the law. Like the prohibition of slavery, the restriction of abortion is a civil rights issue. Abortion is no more a matter of "freedom of choice" than was slavery a matter of "property rights" or segregation a matter of "freedom of association."

I asked Casey whether he was lonely being a pro-life Democrat. "Not," he replied, "as lonely as you must be being a pro-life Ivy League professor." I knew I was going to like this guy. "By embracing abortion," the Governor said, "the Democratic Party is abandoning the principle that made it great: its basic commitment to protecting the weakest and most vulnerable members of the human family."

A few months later, despite his achievements as the two-term Governor of the nation's fifth largest state, the Democratic Party would, to its eternal shame, deny him the right to speak at its national convention. The Clinton Democrats would permit no expression of dissent on the question of killing the unborn.

For half an hour our telephone discussion continued, moving back and forth between the social and political dimensions of the abortion question and its scientific and philosophical aspects. The humanity of the unborn child was a matter not of religious dogma, he observed, but of biological fact. The pro-abortion mentality that had taken root in the elite sector of American culture, and was now firmly in control of the apparatus of his party, was, he declared, a manifestation of what he called the "Cult of the Imperial Self."

Casey was a realist. He was keenly aware that politics could not, by itself, accomplish the cultural renewal that was needed to restore a vision of the common good that included respect for the sanctity of innocent human life. But he was persuaded—and it is clearer today than ever that he was right—that political action is an indispensable ingredient in the struggle.

Finally, I said that I had better let him go. "Surely," I thought to myself, "the Governor of Pennsylvania has more pressing things to do on the morning of his state's presidential primary than chat with a professor." But he wanted to keep talking—though not, as I learned when I tried to shift the conversation to the politics of the day, about the primary election. It was clear that Bill Clinton was going to win in Pennsylvania, and that he would go on to obtain the Democratic nomination. The Governor was resigned to it, but not happy: "Clinton's a shrewd and capable politician," he said, "but not a man you can respect." Casey knew what the rest of us would soon discover.

A week or so later, he called back: "I'd like you to do me a favor: Could you organize a group of pro-life thinkers to get together with me and some other people I'd like to invite to think about a strategy for moving the pro-life cause forward? We can meet here in the Governor's mansion in Harrisburg." I rounded up a number of friends: Bill Porth, Rabbi Marc Gellman, Hadley Arkes of Amherst, Mary Ann Glendon of Harvard, Jim Kurth of Swarthmore, Elizabeth Fox-Genovese of Emory, and Rabbi David Novak, then of the University of Virginia. Not long after, the first of what turned into a series of meetings took place. Later sessions would include political types: the Governor brought in Sargent and Eunice Kennedy Shriver and a few other pro-life Democrats; I brought in Jeffrey Bell and Frank Cannon.

Bell and Cannon, though themselves long-time Republican activists, conceived the idea that the pro-life movement should get behind Casey in a primary challenge to Clinton in 1996. But then tragedy struck: the Governor's health, which had been fragile for several years, went into a sharp decline. To save his life, a rare heart and liver transplant would be required. The idea of a Casey presidential candidacy was put on the shelf.

By late 1994, however, the Governor's truly miraculous recovery enabled him to return to politics. His brush with death only strengthened his resolve to fight for the right to life of the unborn. Three weeks before that year's congressional elections, he spoke to

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a group in Washington that I was also addressing. He had not lost any of his political acumen: "There is an earthquake coming in a few weeks," he predicted. "If you're a politician, you can taste it in the air; any politician who can't taste it is in the wrong business." The "earthquake," which almost none of his fellow politicians managed to "taste" in advance, came in the form of a Republican takeover of Congress.

In the aftermath of the "earthquake," Casey saw an opportunity for a pro-life Democrat to take a shot at Clinton in 1996. He took his own experience of electoral success in Pennsylvania to mean, as he often put it, that "a qualified pro-life Democratic presidential candidate can't lose." In his 1990 reelection as Governor, for example, he had crushed Barbara Hafer, a well-known and credible pro-choice Republican woman, in an extraordinary landslide—carrying sixty-six of the state's sixty-seven counties and winning by more than a million votes. What became clear almost immediately, however, was that Casey alone among the country's remaining handful of pro-life Democratic officeholders possessed the standing and will to take on Clinton and the party establishment. The question was: Would health concerns rule out a presidential campaign?

Casey was once again prepared to give it a shot. He formed a presidential campaign "exploratory committee," calling on Jeff Bell and Frank Cannon to run it. I had told the Governor about my brilliant Princeton colleague John DiIulio, a pro-life Democrat and perhaps the most sought after public policy analyst in American politics. "Sounds like my kind of man," the Governor said. "Ask him to call me." I was far from sure that John could be persuaded to join us. "He is likely to think this effort is quixotic and crazy," I told the Governor. "Have him call me," Casey repeated. DiIulio's reaction was the opposite of what I had feared it would be. "Bob Casey? He's my hero," DiIulio said. "Just ask him what my assignment is."

DiIulio's "assignment" was to become (with me) codirector of the campaign's "issues committee." We signed on a number of notable academics and public policy analysts and began putting together a program that would be, in its social, economic, and foreign policy dimensions, truly pro-life, pro-family, and pro-poor.

Casey had always been a mainstream Democrat. While morally and culturally conservative, he often looked for governmental solutions to social and economic problems that conservatives think can best be addressed by private initiative. He loathed the elements of economic libertarianism that manifest a Social Darwinist, "devil take the hindmost" (as he invariably described it) view of politics and human relations. "This," he insisted, "is how the Cult of the Imperial Self manifests itself in Republican circles." Under the influence of his new band of associates, however, he began to consider that some of the ends he sought could better be attained by means that did not involve the creation and maintenance of large governmental bureaucracies.

Casey became interested in neoconservative ideas, particularly the thought of Irving Kristol. His comfort level was increased, I must say, by the insight that much in neoconservatism harmonizes with the tradition of Catholic social thought—particularly its emphasis on the idea of "subsidiarity." In 1996, he wrote: "Conservatives have a point about some functions of government, and it counts in part for their electoral success. . . . All the money in the world will not solve America's deeper social problems." Like Kristol, Casey knew that the "deeper problems" were fundamentally moral, not economic.

Casey's presidential "exploratory committee" was encouraged by two early developments: first, the Governor, despite his outspokenness on behalf of the unborn, was being treated by the media with great respect; second, our initial fund-raising efforts made clear that we would be able to support a serious challenge to Clinton. Then came the blow: three weeks into the venture, it became clear to the Governor and his family that he simply lacked the stamina to continue the effort. It would have to fold, this time for good.

Governor Casey continued to speak out for the pro-life cause and made the promotion of adoption as the loving alternative to abortion a centerpiece of his efforts. He helped his eldest son Bobby get elected to statewide office as Auditor General (a position he had himself held before becoming governor) and looked forward to the prospect of some of his younger sons entering electoral politics. He enjoyed spending time with his beloved wife Ellen and their enormous clan of children and grandchildren. John Wauck captured the thought of many of us who have known the Casey family: "They are the G-rated version of the Kennedys."

In the aftermath of the Governor's heart and liver transplant, the *New York Times* referred to him as a "folk hero" for his courage and determination. It was a status he had earned long before the surgery.

In 1990, James Carville, who was running Casey's reelection campaign, pleaded with him to modify his position on abortion. (Surely by then Carville should have known better than to try; but, I suppose, in the heat of a campaign he forgot that he was working for a man of principle.) As Casey was preparing for a televised debate with Ms. Hafer, Carville bluntly told him that if he did not give in on the question of permitting

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abortion in cases of rape and incest he would lose the election. "If that's true," the Governor replied, "then I'll just have to accept defeat." Casey did not need polls, focus groups, or handlers to tell him what to think or say. Carville would have had more luck trying to move the Rock of Gibraltar. Casey was a fierce competitor who had lost elections earlier in his career, and he hated losing. But the prospect of winning with the blood of abortion's victims on his hands had no appeal to him whatsoever.

He often remarked that "paid operatives speak for the abortion industry, feminist zealots purport to speak for women, population controllers claim to speak for the planet—I speak for the child." So he did. In so doing, he also spoke for the basic American principle of "equal justice for all."

Henry Hyde, a man of like stature in the other party, once paid tribute to Casey: "The Democrats say they speak for 'the little guy'; Bob Casey speaks for the littlest guy of all—the unborn child."

With the Governor's death on May 30, the pro-life movement has lost a champion, the Democratic Party its conscience, and American politics a model of principled statesmanship. Requiescat in pace.

Robert P. George *is the McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence at Princeton University.*

Pius XII as Scapegoat

Michael Novak

From the beginning of his papacy in 1939 until well after his death in 1958, Pope Pius XII was honored with unfeigned warmth by Jewish leaders around the world. Golda Meir was uncommonly effusive in her praise of him. Trees were planted in Israel in his honor. In 1955, the Israeli Philharmonic Orchestra flew to the Vatican to give a special concert to show the nation's gratitude. In 1940, Albert Einstein wrote a tribute in *Time.* At his death, tributes were universal and eloquent, especially by those Jewish groups closest to his efforts.

A later generation, in contrast, has been exceedingly harsh. Why this stunning reversal? Whose interests are served? As it turns out, the spectrum of those who benefit by denigrating Pius XII is very broad.

The reversal might be said to have begun in April 1945. The instant Hitler fell, the propaganda machine of Stalinist communism turned full-bore on Pius XII, then on the Catholic bishops and priests of Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, France, and Italy. The strategic aim was to prepare the way for Communist governments in the Slavic and Latin countries of Catholic Europe. More than he had feared Hitler—and with good reason, as events after 1989 demonstrated—Stalin feared the moral power of the Pope.

The attack on Pius XII took on major proportions, however, only in 1963, with Rolf Hochhuth's surprisingly successful play, *The Deputy.* Even though it was roundly denounced by historians, the play drew moral attention away from Hitler and moral pressure away from Germany, especially Protestant and pagan Germany, and shifted the spotlight of moral condemnation in the direction of the Pope and the Catholic Church.

Today, a considerable number of "progressive" Catholics, not least among them former priests and seminarians, choose to beat up on Pius XII as a way of diminishing the papacy in general, and thus also the present Pope with whom they especially disagree. This is the express intention of John Cornwell, author of *Hitler's Pope*: to discredit John Paul II and his ilk, that is, popes speaking as solitary moral voices (which, though he does not seem to notice it, more or less undercuts Cornwell's case against the solitary moral voice of Pius XII). One can only wish progressive Catholics better luck next pope, even if they have trouble making up their minds about what they want in papal outspokenness.

A few Jewish spokespersons today, both in America and elsewhere, have also turned on Pius XII. For the first fifteen years or so after World War II, the effort to comprehend the sheer barbarity, madness, and evil of Hitler and his entire machinery of death ended in frustration. There followed many recriminations among Jewish groups themselves, as chronicled in Walter Laqueur's book *The Terrible Secret.* The terrible secret is how long it took the public to recognize that after January 1942 the Nazis were serious about exterminating Jews. Many Jews fought and died in furious resistance, in vain. But most could not believe what was happening to them until far too late.

Why, it was now urgently insisted, didn't someone warn them? Why didn't someone sound the alarm? Why didn't at least one world leader raise a voice in moral condemnation and say, "This must stop!"

Here, too, refocusing the question on Pius XII brought moral relief. Journalists and commentators of many different backgrounds (including Catholics), who had never before thought that popes counted for

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much, now imagined that one word from the Pope, one dramatic statement, might have had the necessary miraculous effects.

In fact, what Pius XII did say and do—especially through Vatican Radio, jammed as it was in Germany—was almost daily amplified by the BBC and other Allied radio broadcasters. Reports of atrocities were easily dismissed as war propaganda, to which the public had become inured during World War I. Appeals to Hitler would have been even more futile: the Fuehrer knew he was violating Christian moral principles; in his eyes Christianity was a religion for weaklings, and he had contempt for it. Besides, when Pius XII had pleaded with every ounce of public strength for one last peace conference in the summer of 1939, before an irreversible descent into the cauldron of war, no one took him seriously. No one even answered his summons, neither the Axis powers nor the Allies. That was the last time he had freedom of access to worldwide media.

Once the war began, Mussolini shut the Pope up in the Vatican, and every means of communication he had was censored—his mail, Vatican Radio, *L'Osservatore Romano*. Four different Nazi intelligence organizations, along with the more pervasive Italian ones, penetrated the Vatican. (It was easy to threaten the families of Vatican employees, virtually all of whom commuted into the Vatican gates every working day.) The Holy See, moreover, was totally dependent on the Italian government for essential services: water, sewage, electricity, telephone, telegraph, and food. Even with all this, Hitler's unhappiness with Pius XII was such that he twice gave orders that contingency plans for occupying the Vatican be put into operation. Paratroopers were to attack suddenly and haul the Pope off to Germany. Twice his orders were frustrated by local commanders, who delayed until he was distracted elsewhere. (One told him he was assembling experts in Latin and Greek who could decide which of the archives to haul off, and this would take six weeks.)

When the Pope had full voice nobody listened. Are we to believe that when he could not be heard unless his keepers let his words go forth, *then* the world would have listened? For most Catholics, such reasoning is hard to understand. During the last fifteen years, for instance, there has been no lack of dramatic statements by Pope John Paul II (and Mother Teresa)—sometimes in the very face of world leaders, and before vast audiences on international television—against the systemic use of abortion and euthanasia and "the culture of death" they represent. Few listen. Why would they have listened in 1942 or 1943?

The Allies were interested in the Pope when he made propaganda for their side. They didn't want him criticizing Communist atrocities, since Stalin was an ally; they didn't want him condemning Allied carpet-bombing of German and Italian cities. But they did want him to condemn the German carpet-bombings of London and Coventry. They were furious when he was silent.

As prisoner in the Vatican, Pius XII was silent about many things, and on principle, not out of fear. Archbishop Sapieha of Krakow upbraided him publicly for not speaking up in late 1939 and 1940 as the intellectual leaders of the Polish Church, lay and clerical, were persecuted by the thousands, beaten, killed, thrown into concentration camps. Sapieha later recognized that moving into open rhetorical warfare would have been useless—and worse, positively inflammatory. He later grasped the method in the Pope's coolness and followed suit in his own style of leadership as the years went by. He was young Karol Wojtyla's protector and teacher.

The vulnerability and weakness of the papacy was nothing new. Among recent namesakes of Pius XII, two (Pius VI and Pius VII) had been jostled in rude carts to Paris for delicious humiliation by Napoleon; the chancellor of Pius IX had been assassinated on the marble stairs of his office building, while the Pope had to flee Rome for his life; Leo XIII was also driven into temporary exile in the late nineteenth century. Pius XII knew this history and knew precisely the Vatican's vulnerabilities, but he told a boastful and threatening Goebbels to his face that he personally feared nothing, and would never leave Rome. Often described as distant and analytical, Pius also had cold steel in his spine.

A skilled reader of men, Pius had carefully diagnosed both Hitler (given to flying into destructive rages) and Mussolini (more reasonable and, even better, Italian). The Pope knew that on at least a few big things he could eventually persuade Mussolini—keeping Rome a free city, for instance—but he also knew he had been thrown into a game of wits with Hitler, in which an iron determination not to be baited out of formal neutrality might prevail against all odds. No matter how bleak everything appeared from 1939 to 1943, Pius XII judged that coolness under fire would allow him to shepherd such strengths as could be deployed to alleviate suffering.

Many people around the Pope begged him to speak out more dramatically—the ambassadors of Britain, Brazil, and France, for instance, confined by necessities of war in cramped rooms inside the Vatican walls. The Pope pointed out that he *was* speaking out, very strongly, in clear and unmistakable *principles*. More than once, he drew the portrait of the brutal jackboot of racism, unjustified violence, and the gross slaugh-

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ter of human beings. He did not, of course, point out *which* powers the portrait described. To figure that out did not take rocket science; the propagandists at BBC knew instantly how to put those papal condemnations at Hitler's feet, and did so within hours. Hitler's infuriated analysts saw just as quickly how the Pope intended his words to be used, but (cleverly) without formally violating neutrality. Worse, if the Nazis attacked what the Pope said, they confirmed the accuracy of the BBC's sharp thrusts.

Among world leaders, none was more at the mercy of surrounding Axis powers for the entire period of the war than Pius XII. But none spoke as openly as he did or fed the world press with as much vital information about what was happening. He also saved a large number of Jewish lives through opening convents, monasteries, and religious houses to clandestine sanctuary, and brought face-to-face, hand-to-hand relief to millions who suffered as refugees. Pope Pius XII worked out his strategy early, learned to adjust his tactics, and never heard a convincing reason—though he heard many reasons—to do differently. He was as steady and courageous as he was cool and analytical.

A less disciplined course, Pius XII knew, might have led him to become more confrontational. If that course resulted in an even more open and draconian warfare on the Church, the very best, ablest, and bravest would have been killed or imprisoned earliest. All would have been reduced to silent servility. The Pope probably would have been spared, mocked for his helplessness, and reduced to the isolated, almost demented state in which Napoleon left Pius VII. But scores of thousands of others would die, with no tangible gain. Hitler was yearning for the confrontation. Wiser heads trapped under Hitler's power, with a view to the future, were not.

For some critics, all this is too subtle. They demand in retrospect an open, no-holds-barred papal condemnation of unprecedented evil. They offer nothing but speculation about what would have followed from such a statement. Indeed, for the rigor of their logical position, they must concede to the papacy far greater rhetorical power than modern theories of the advanced secularization of Europe permit. Do such historians pledge that they, for instance, would heed the solemn words of a pope today, even when those words go against their own beliefs and interests? And if they wouldn't today, why would others then?

The fury of recent attacks on Pius XII, in contrast with the almost universal esteem he enjoyed from the beginning of the war until his death, is fed by different passions than those of sixty years ago. Among those secular Jews whose chief organizing principle is the Holocaust, one hears the simultaneous assertion that all theological notions are abstruse and fanciful, and yet that a theological condemnation of the Holocaust by Pius XII would have made a difference. Others today who are bitterly opposed to the Church's perennial position against the moral approval of homosexual acts, or against abortion or euthanasia, also seem to delight in weakening the moral authority of the papacy. At the commanding heights of culture, as the Marxists used to say, this new establishment resents the imputation that what it blesses as moral is contrary to the law of God and hence immoral. The critics of Pius XII are deflecting attention from themselves; for this new establishment, it is convenient to discredit the messenger.

The more antithetical the times to Catholic substance, the higher the prestige of the papacy seems to climb. It appears to be an office most easily injured by universal obeisance, and bravest and most useful when it runs against the grain. Two thousand years on the same spot, above the tomb of Peter, it has seen many powerful establishments rise and fall. Today's charges against Pius XII cannot stand scrutiny.

Michael Novak *holds the George Frederick Jewett Chair in Religion and Public Policy at the American Enterprise Institute.*

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Markets and Morals

Jonathan Sacks

In 1978, Friedrich Hayek proposed a great debate. He was by then almost eighty years old, but the passion with which he sought to defend the market order against what he saw as the heresy of collectivism was undiminished. So, as if hoping to settle the issue once and for all, he suggested nothing less than an international disputation that would discuss the question, "Was socialism a mistake?" The event did not take place, but Hayek nonetheless produced a large manuscript setting out his beliefs, which was published in an abridged form as *The Fatal Conceit.* What interests me in particular about the book is its last chapter, "Religion and the Guardians of Tradition." What led Hayek, who had devoted a lifetime to the study of economics and politics, to seal this work with a reflection on religion and tradition?

The striking feature of religion, for Hayek, is its attitude of humility, even reverence, towards the great moral institutions without which our complex liberal democratic societies could not have developed. It guards against what he calls "the rationalist delusion that man, by exercising his intelligence, invented morals that gave him the power to achieve more than he could ever foresee." Of course it does so by insisting that our morals were given by God. For Hayek, they were arrived at by the evolutionary forces of history. What these two views held in common, though, was a strong and principled opposition to the idea that individually or collectively we can devise a better system rationally constructed to maximize happiness or some other good.

It is a fascinating argument, and it places Hayek in a line of thinkers—such as Edmund Burke, Max Weber, and most recently Francis Fukuyama—who have reflected not only on the morality of the marketplace (what we call nowadays "business ethics") but on the wider question of what kind of society gives rise to and is able to sustain a market economy. The answer each of them gave—an answer that has been given new salience by the rise of the economies of Southeast Asia—is that it tends to be a society with a strong respect for certain kinds of tradition.

Like Burke, Hayek combines liberalism in economics and politics with a marked conservatism in morality. Free institutions, Burke and Hayek seem to say, are best preserved by a certain piety towards the past. Traditions encode the accumulated wisdom of earlier generations in a way that no single generation, however sophisticated, could discover for itself; and it is through learning those traditions and passing them on to our children that we avoid extremely costly mistakes. Paradoxically, it may be just those societies that have strong religious and moral habits that form the best environment for economic development and technological innovation. It may be that those who are most secure in their past are the most confident and energetic in shaping the future.

Twenty years after *The Fatal Conceit* and a decade after socialism's fall, it is important for us to bear in mind that the market economy can be sustained only by the habits of behavior and restraint that Hayek called traditions. He believed that the threat to these traditions was socialism. Doubtless, in his day it was. But what he paid far less attention to was the possibility that traditions might be undermined not by anti-market ideologies but by the very power of the market itself. For the market is not only an institution of exchange. It is also a highly antitraditional force, at least in advanced consumer societies. The stimulation of demand, for example, depends on a culture, even a

Jonathan Sacks *is Chief Rabbi of the United Hebrew Congregations of the British Commonwealth.*

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cult, of the new, the product that improves on the past and renders it obsolete in an increasingly short space of time. It encourages a view of human life itself as a series of consumer choices rather than as a set of inherited ways of doing things.

One of the most fateful developments is the displacement of human identity. Our identity used to be something given by the history into which we are born. Now we conceive of it as something like a suit of clothes we can choose, wear for a while, and then discard in favor of the new season's fashion—the move graphically illustrated by our change of terminology from "life" to "lifestyle," with its suggestion that there is nothing of substance that defines who we are. In the process, religion itself is transformed from salvation to a branch of the leisure industry, and we are transformed, as one writer put it, "from pilgrim to tourist."

That is why it is sometimes useful to do what Hayek advised us to do in *The Fatal Conceit*, namely, to reflect on the role of religion in sustaining a particular kind of moral order. That is what I want to do, taking the experience of Jews and Judaism as an example. It was of course Max Weber, in his famous work on *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, who made us familiar with the idea that religion—in particular Calvinism—was one of the great shaping forces of the modern economy. More recently Michael Novak has written powerfully about the same subject from a Catholic perspective. But few writers have doubted the contribution Jews made to the development of finance, business, and industry, a contribution that can be traced far back into the Middle Ages and beyond.

It would be quite wrong to identify a great religious tradition with any particular set of economic institutions. It was, after all, the biblical Joseph who instituted the first known example of centralized economic planning, using the seven years of plenty to prepare for the seven years of famine, and whose ability to forecast trade cycles is probably still the envy of economists. Jewish history contains some of the great experiments in socialist utopias, from the property-sharing communities of the Essenes in the Second Temple period to the modern Israeli kibbutz. But there is no doubt that, for the most part, Jews and Judaism itself found free competition and trade the system most congruent with their values.

What was it about Judaism that led to this elective affinity between it and the market economy? In his stimulating recent book *The Wealth and Poverty of Nations*, David Landes identifies a number of factors. First there was the biblical respect for property rights. This he sees as nothing less than a revolution against the ancient world and the power it gave rulers to regard the property of the tribe or the people as their own. By contrast, when Moses finds his leadership challenged by the Israelites during the Korach rebellion, he says about his relation to the people, "I have not taken one ass from them nor have I wronged any one of them."

For a ruler to abuse property rights is, for the Hebrew Bible, one of the great corruptions of power. Judaism is the religion of a people born in slavery and longing for redemption; and the great assault of slavery against human dignity is that it deprives me of the ownership of the wealth I create. At the heart of the Hebrew Bible is the God who seeks the free worship of free human beings, and two of the most powerful safeguards of freedom are private property and economic independence. The ideal society envisaged by the prophets is one in which each person is able to sit "underneath his own vine and fig tree." The prophet Samuel in his famous speech on the dangers of monarchy—which might borrow Hayek's title *The Road to Serfdom*—warns against the constant temptation of kings to expropriate persons and property for the public good. Government, he seems to argue, may be necessary, but the less of it there is, the better.

Beyond this, Landes identifies in the Judeo-Christian tradition an openness to invention and innovation. In part this has to do with the biblical respect for labor. God tells Noah, for example, that he will be saved from the flood, but it is Noah who has to build the ark. The high value Judaism sets on work can be traced throughout the biblical and rabbinic literature. If not itself a religious act, it comes close to being a condition of the religious life. "Six days shall you labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is a Sabbath to the Lord your God"—meaning that we serve God through work as well as rest. By our labor we become, in the striking rabbinic phrase, "partners with God in the work of creation."

The Jewish liturgy for Saturday night—the point at which the day of rest ends—culminates in a hymn to the value of work: "When you eat of the labor of your hands, you are happy and it shall be well with you." On this, the rabbis commented that "you are happy" refers to this life; "it shall be well with you" refers to life in the world to come. Work, in other words, has spiritual value, because earning our food is part of the essential dignity of the human condition. Animals *find* sustenance; only mankind *creates* it. As the thirteenth-century commentator Rabbenu Bachya put it, "The active participation of man in the creation of his own wealth is a sign of his spiritual greatness."

As a result, Judaism never developed either an aristocratic or a cloistered ethic that was dismissive of the productive economy. The great rabbis were themselves laborers or businessmen or professionals. They

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knew that the Jewish community needed an economic as well as a spiritual base. Accordingly, the Talmud lists as one of the duties of a parent to teach one's child a craft or trade through which he can earn a living. Maimonides rules that one who is wise "first establishes himself in an occupation which supports him, afterwards he buys a home, and after that he marries." More powerful still is his ruling that to provide someone with a job is higher than any other form of welfare benefit:

> The highest degree of charity, exceeded by none, is that of a person who assists a poor Jew by providing him with a gift or a loan or by accepting him into a business partnership or by helping him to find employment—in a word, by putting him where he can dispense with other people's aid. With reference to such help it is said, "You shall strengthen him, be he a stranger or a settler, he shall live with you" (Leviticus 25:35), which means to strengthen him in such a manner that his falling into want is prevented.

All other forms of charity leave the recipient dependent on charity. Work alone restores his self-respect and independence. "Flay carcasses in the marketplace," said the third-century teacher Rav, "and do not say: I am a priest and a great man and it is beneath my dignity."

No less important than the value placed on work is Judaism's positive attitude to the creation of wealth. Asceticism and self-denial have little place in Jewish spirituality. The world is God's creation; therefore it is good, and prosperity is a sign of God's blessing. God has handed the world over to human stewardship, commanding, "Be fruitful and multiply, fill the earth and subdue it." God, taught Rabbi Akiva in the second century, deliberately left the world unfinished so that it could be completed by the work of man. Industry is more than mere labor. It is the arena in which we transform the world.

It was Max Weber who observed that one of the revolutions of biblical thought was to demythologize, or disenchant, nature. For the first time human beings could see the condition of the world not as something given, sacrosanct and wrapped in mystery, but as something that could be rationally understood and improved upon. This perspective, central to Judaism, even today makes rabbinical authorities surprisingly open to new medical technologies such as genetic engineering and cloning, and tends to make religious Jews among the most dedicated users of the Internet and multimedia for purposes of education.

Above all, from a Jewish perspective, economic growth has religious significance because it allows us to alleviate poverty. Judaism's early sages had the sanest view of poverty I know, and they did so because most of them were poor men. They refused theologically to anaesthetize its pain. They would utterly have rejected Marx's description of religion as the opium of the people. In Judaism, poverty is not, as in some faiths, a blessed condition. It is, the rabbis said, "a kind of death" and "worse than fifty plagues." They said: "Nothing is harder to bear than poverty, because he who is crushed by poverty is like one to whom all the troubles of the world cling and upon whom all the curses of Deuteronomy have descended. If all other troubles were placed on one side and poverty on the other, poverty would outweigh them all."

The sages were not so much concerned with the elimination of poverty through redistributive taxation. Instead, what they sought to create was a society in which the poor had access to help when they needed it, through charity to be sure, but also and especially through job creation. Hence with wealth came responsibility: richesse oblige. Successful businessmen were expected to set an example of philanthropy and to take on positions of community leadership. Conspicuous consumption was frowned upon, and periodically banned through local "sumptuary laws." Wealth was a divine blessing, and therefore it carried with it an obligation to use it for the benefit of the whole community.

Not the least significant of Judaic contributions to the development of Western Civilization was its emphasis on, perhaps even invention of, linear time. Ancient cultures tended to think of time as cyclical, seasonal, a matter of eternal recurrences to an original and unchanging nature of things. The Hebrew prophets were the first to see time in a quite different way—as a journey towards a destination, a narrative with a beginning and middle, even if the end (the messianic society) is always beyond the horizon. It is ultimately to this revolution that we owe the very notion of progress as a historical category, the idea that things are not predestined always to remain what they were. Hope, even more than necessity, is the mother of invention.

And to this we must add one further idea. The great philosophical advocates of the market—Bernard Mandeville, David Hume, and Adam Smith—were struck by a phenomenon that many considered to be scandalous and amoral. This was their discovery that the market produced benefits to all through a series of actions and transactions that were essentially self-interested in their motivation. As Adam Smith bluntly put it: "It is not from the benevo-

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lence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest." Within the system of free trade, as Smith put it most famously, the individual "intends only his own gain, and he is, in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end which was no part of his intention." This fact—that markets and their associated institutions tend to work on the basis not of altruism but of somewhat earthier motives—has always led to a high-minded disdain for everything suggested by the word "commercial."

Not so within Judaism. Long before Mandeville and Smith, Judaism had accepted the proposition that the greatest advances are often brought about through quite unspiritual drives. "I saw," says the author of Ecclesiastes, "that all labor and all achievement spring from man's envy of his neighbor." Or as the talmudic sages put it, "Were it not for the evil inclination, no one would build a house, marry a wife, have children, or engage in business." Purity of heart was essential to the relationship between man and God. But in relations between man and man what mattered was the result, not the sentiment with which it was brought about. Jews would find it easy to agree with the remark of Sir James Frazer that "it is better for the world that men should be right from wrong motives than that they would do wrong with the best intentions."

In general, then, the rabbis favored markets and competition because they generated wealth, lowered prices, increased choice, reduced absolute levels of poverty, and in the course of time extended humanity's control over the environment, narrowing the extent to which we are the passive victims of circumstance and fate. Competition releases energy and creativity and serves the general good. Admittedly, Jewish law permitted protectionist policies in some cases to safeguard the local economy, especially when the outside trader did not pay taxes. There were also times when rabbinic authorities intervened to lower prices of essential commodities. But in general they favored the free market, nowhere more so than in their own professional sphere of Jewish education. An established teacher could not object to a rival setting up in competition. The reason they gave for this ruling illustrates their general approach. They said simply, "Jealousy among scholars increases wisdom."

Needless to say, in a strongly moralistic faith like Judaism, alongside the respect for markets went a sharp insistence on the ethics of business. At one of the critical points of the Jewish calendar, on the Sabbath before the Ninth of Av when we recall the destruction of the two Temples, we read in the synagogue the great first chapter of Isaiah with its insistence that without political and economic integrity, religious piety is in vain:

> Seek justice, encourage the oppressed,
> Defend the cause of the fatherless,
> Plead the case of the widow . . .
> Your silver has become dross,
> Your choice wine is diluted with water.
> Your rulers are rebels, companions of thieves,
> They all love bribes and chase after gifts.

The same message is carried through into the teachings of the rabbis. According to Rava, a fourth-century sage, when a person comes to the next world for judgment, the first question he is asked is: Did you deal honestly in business? In the school of Rabbi Ishmael it was taught that whoever conducts himself honestly in business is as if he fulfilled the whole of Jewish law. The perennial temptations of the market—to pursue gain at someone else's expense, to take advantage of ignorance, to treat employees with indifference—needed to be fought against. Canons of fair trading had to be established and policed, and much of Jewish law is taken up with these concerns. The rabbis recognized that a perfect market would not emerge of its own accord.

Perhaps the best summary of the way Judaism differed from Christianity, at least in its pre-Reformation guise, was given by Michael Novak:

> In both its prophetic and rabbinic traditions Jewish thought has always felt comfortable with a certain well-ordered worldliness, whereas the Christian has always felt a pull toward otherworldliness. Jewish thought has had a candid orientation toward private property, commercial activity, markets, and profits, whereas Catholic thought—articulated from an early period chiefly among priests and monks—has persistently tried to direct the attention of its adherents beyond the activities and interests of this world to the next.

So much, then, by way of an overview of Jewish economic ethics. Next, I want to draw attention to five features of Judaism, essential to its way of life, that on the face of it stand utterly opposed to the market ethic.

The first, of course, is the Sabbath and its related institutions, the sabbatical year and the jubilee. The Sabbath is the boundary Judaism draws around economic activity. What marked the Sabbath off from all other religious celebrations in the ancient world was its concept of a day of rest. So unintelligible was this to the writers of ancient Greece that they accused Jews of observing it merely out of laziness. But of course what

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was at the heart of the Sabbath was and is the idea that there are important truths about the human condition that cannot be accounted for in terms of work or economics. The Sabbath is the day on which we neither work nor employ others to do our work, on which we neither buy nor sell, in which all manipulation of nature for creative ends is forbidden, in which all hierarchies of power or wealth are suspended.

The Sabbath is one of those phenomena—incomprehensible from the outside—that you have to live in order to understand. For countless generations of Jews it was the still point in the turning world, the moment at which we renew our attachment to family and community, during which we live the truth that the world is not wholly ours to bend to our will but something given to us in trust to conserve for future generations, and in which the inequalities of a market economy are counterbalanced by a world in which money does not count, in which we are all equal citizens. The Jewish writer Achad Ha-am was surely correct when he said that more than the Jews have kept the Sabbath, the Sabbath has kept the Jews. It was and is the one day in seven in which we live out all those values that are in danger of being obscured in the daily rush of events; the day in which we stop making a living and learn instead simply how to live.

Secondly, consider marriage and the family. Judaism is one of the great familial traditions, and this despite the fact that in strict legal terms a Jewish marriage has the form of a contract; that Judaism has never prohibited divorce by mutual consent; and that it is quite relaxed about that modern development, the prenuptial agreement, and indeed sees it as a useful device in alleviating the stress of separation. The reason Judaism has often succeeded in sustaining strong marriages and families has little to do with the structure of Jewish marriage law, and a great deal to do with its ritual life, the way in which many of the supreme religious moments take place in the home as a dialogue between husband and wife, or between parents and children. Ultimately, Judaism saw marriage not as a contract but as the supreme example of a covenant, namely a commitment based not on mutual benefit but on mutual belonging, whose key value is fidelity, holding fast to one another especially during difficult times because you are part of who I am. The Jewish family survived because, in the graphic phrase of the sages, it was surrounded by "a hedge of roses," an elaborate network of rituals that bound individuals together in a matrix of mutual giving that was utterly at odds with a market ethic.

Thirdly, consider education. I have already mentioned that Jewish law favors competition in the provision of teaching. What it did not do, however, was to leave access to education to the market and to the ability to pay. Even in the days of Moses, Jews were instructed to set the highest religious value on education—as one of our most famous prayers, taken from the book of Deuteronomy, puts it: "You shall teach these things diligently to your children, speaking of them when you sit at home or travel on the way, when you lie down and when you rise up." And by the first century, Jews had constructed the world's first system of universal compulsory education, funded by collective taxation. Education, the life of the mind, an ability to follow a train of thought and see the alternative possibilities that give rise to argument, are essential features of Jewish spirituality, and ones to which everyone, however poor, must be given access.

Fourthly, the concept of property. I mentioned earlier that Judaism has a high regard for private property as an institution governing the relations between human beings. At the same time, though, governing the relationship between humanity and God, there has been an equal insistence that what we have we do not unconditionally own. Ultimately everything belongs to God. What we have, we hold in trust. And there are conditions to that trust—or as the great Victorian Jew Sir Moses Montefiore put it, "We are worth what we are willing to share with others."

And finally, there is the Jewish tradition of law itself. It was a non-Jew, William Rees-Mogg, who first drew my attention to the connection between Jewish law and the control of inflation, a link that I confess I never thought of making. His argument is contained in *The Reigning Error*, a book he wrote in 1974, a time of high inflation. It was simply this: "Inflation is a disease of inordinacy." It comes about through a failure to understand that energy, to be channeled, needs restraints. It was the constant discipline of law, he says, that provided the boundaries within which Jewish creativity could flow. The law, to quote his words, "has acted as a bottle inside which this spiritual and intellectual energy could be held; only because it could be held has it been possible to make use of it. It has not merely exploded or been dispersed; it has been harnessed as a continuous power." Jews, for Rees-Mogg, were a model of acquired self-restraint, and it was the failure of societies to practice self-restraint that led to runaway inflation.

And with this I come back to Hayek and *The Fatal Conceit*. It was Hayek's view that moral systems produced their results, not directly or by conscious intention, but rather in the long run and often in ways that could not have been foreseen. Certainly Jews believed that their way of life would lead to the blessings of prosperity. That, after all, is the substance of many of Moses' prophecies. But there was no direct

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connection between institutions like the Sabbath and economic growth. How could there be? The Sabbath, the family, the educational system, the concept of ownership as trusteeship, and the disciplines of the law were not constructed on the basis of economic calculation. To the contrary, they were ways in which Judaism in effect said to the market: thus far and no farther. There are realms in which you may not intrude.

The concept of the holy is precisely the domain in which the worth of things is not judged by their market price or economic value. And this fundamental insight of Judaism is all the more striking given its respect for the market within the marketplace. The fatal conceit for Judaism is to believe that the market governs the totality of our lives, when it in fact governs only a limited part of it, that which concerns the goods we think of as being subject to production and exchange. There are things fundamental to being human that we do not produce; instead we receive from those who came before us and from God Himself. And there are things that we may not exchange, however high the price.

Socialism is not the only enemy of the market economy. Another enemy, all the more powerful for its recent global triumph, is the market economy itself. When everything that matters can be bought and sold, when commitments can be broken because they are no longer to our advantage, when shopping becomes salvation and advertising slogans become our litany, when our worth is measured by how much we earn and spend, then the market is destroying the very virtues on which in the long run it depends. That, not the return of socialism, is the danger that advanced economies now face. And in these times, when markets seem to hold out the promise of uninterrupted growth in our satisfaction of desires, the voice of our great religious traditions needs to be heard, warning us of the gods that devour their own children, and of the temples that stand today as relics of civilizations that once seemed invincible.

The market, in my view, has already gone too far: not indeed as an economic system, but as a cast of thought governing relationships and the image we have of ourselves. A great rabbi once taught this lesson to a successful but unhappy businessman. He took him to the window and asked him, What do you see? The man replied, I see the world. He then took him to a mirror and asked, What do you see? He replied, I see myself. That, said the rabbi, is what happens when silver covers glass. Instead of seeing the world you see only yourself. The idea that human happiness can be exhaustively accounted for in terms of things we can buy, exchange, and replace is one of the great corrosive acids that eat away the foundations on which society rests; and by the time we have discovered this, it is already too late.

The market does not survive by market forces alone. It depends on respect for institutions, which are themselves expressions of our reverence for the human individual as the image and likeness of God. FT

Narrowboats

I love the ones most obviously
lived in: bicycles and pots of lavender
arrayed on a roof, a stub-chimney
gusting coal smoke into the blue remainder
of a wintry day, a cat at the window
watching through curtains as the world
on shore flows past it, full of prams and slow
old men with hobbling dogs. Riding the cold,
insistent current below the weir, feeling it pull
downstream—imagine—even in your sleep;
even moored, even believing that it's possible
to still yourself against something so deep
and used to its way, you'd have to live
as if nothing lasted. Something has to give.

Sally Thomas

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Technicians of Learning

Edward Tingley

Modern institutions talk about themselves. When a corporation *refashions* itself—undergoes a complete makeover not merely to look different, but to play an entirely different role—this revolution is fundamentally a matter of talk. Such a transformation took place in the university in the nineteenth century. It took place with much announcing and promising, and because the culture was *ready* for a new university serving entirely new purposes in line with the whole new drive of the world now dawning, this explaining was just the thing. In fact it was designed to convince. Today, there are people who look upon our universities as splendid and steadily improving accomplishments, while others look at the reams of readerless studies that fill academic journals, the bandwagon thinking that facilitates publication, and the new-new-thing mentality that keeps the syllabus almost as changeable as the fall TV lineup, and see a naked, destitute joke. The first crowd, who are in the majority, do not think there is any interesting tale to tell about the university in the nineteenth century, other than as the rise to today. But they ignore a question that the second group sees as pivotal: What is an educated person? The first crowd is increasingly concerned with the protection of funding, accreditation criteria, the academic/administration relationship, the corrections and revisions and inclusions and disposals recommended to make the university more inclusive, more diverse, less archaic. They assume there is no need to answer our question, because it has already been answered: education just is what the university does.

EDWARD TINGLEY *is an editor at the Canadian Centre for Architecture, Montreal. This essay is adapted from his newly completed study* An Industrial History of Learning: Art and Knowledge in the Age of the Commodity.

One pitfall of much discussion about the university is that it is about "the university." What we call "the university" is really a highly diverse collective of schools and scholars, pursuing very different kinds of learning. To be educated, however, was not traditionally the outcome of just any sort of learning. Until the late nineteenth century, it was hardly possible to imagine an "education" that did not address certain questions—questions that, in effect, constituted the substance of the humanities, especially in those regions that deal with created representations of human life: the works taught in departments of philosophy and religion, picturing the "first things" of a human life, or of English and art history, regaling us with all forms of human business.

Let us limit the focus to these texts and works and look back at what happened to their study in the nineteenth century, especially after about 1870. At that time philosophy and theology shifted from the center of the university to become mere departments, while the history of art and literature became new university "disciplines." We call this the "professionalization" of study, a development that followed upon the creation in nineteenth-century Germany of what is known as the modern university.

The first universities in the Middle Ages were founded in part to instruct the student in wisdom, "the truth in which the supreme good is perceived"—for thinkers like Augustine, this was the very "road of life," the way of genuine happiness. It used to be that the university was inhabited, as Julien Benda once explained, by a "race" of people "whose interests are set outside the practical world . . . and hence in a certain manner say: 'My kingdom is not of this world.'" By 1800, however, the idea had arisen that what this medieval institution obstructed was precisely "learn-

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ing": bondage to church and state had reduced it to a training ground for clerics and civil servants. The modern university therefore repudiated the preeminence of creed to devote itself solely to the interests of learning itself, assuming the role of an autonomous servant to society at large. It would now produce knowledge with the same means/end effectiveness, the same pride in the delivery of a quality product, that one found in the manufacture of brass clocks and biscuits. In this era study indeed takes on "a new rigor," a true professionality. But this rigor contained within it certain ambiguities—not illicit Cartesian uncertainties that cried out for positivism but the questions following any change in institutional role: What standards do I apply in this new context? To whom am I answerable? What requires my attention most seriously? Education was advancing, modernizing, but with an ideal that needed clarification, and this clarification was indeed supplied—furnished by the keynote of life in this very period.

The university became the producer of well-made knowledge and its purveyor to society. It proposed, and society accepted, a relationship in which *genuine* knowledge would be made available to society in exchange, in effect, for academic freedom. The boom, the hustle, the rise of everything that now surrounds us—buildings, networks, commerce, industries—gave this new education the okay, and the result is arguably the most successful institution in the world today. "Except perhaps for big-time soccer," writes Jaroslav Pelikan, "the university seems to have become the most nearly universal man-made institution in the modern world."

Yet in this thinking and in the idea of *knowledge* at its root, the whole business of *education* lost its place. The humanities embarked, eager to deliver, on a revolutionary path and simply fell into step with the buzz of the age: progressive manufacture. Learning was transformed, taking leave of a view of education that, as Gertrude Himmelfarb has put it, "would speak to the souls as well as the minds of students." Such an outcome holds no mystery: learning is now a traffic in *information,* in material that has achieved commodity status precisely by disengaging itself from the problems of human life.

A return to history is necessary to clarify that what we have accepted as a straightforward success story was in fact a situation of good intentions, high ambitions, hazy means, and tragi-comic allegiances. Three German universities are the models of the university as we know it today: Halle, Göttingen, and Berlin, the latter two (founded respectively in 1737 and 1809) becoming, as the *Encyclopaedia Britannica* tells us, the prototype "institutions of modern learning and research" where "laboratory experimentation replaced conjecture" and "theological, philosophical, and other traditional doctrines were examined with a new rigor." These institutions were new not because they repudiated tradition; theology remained one of their most important faculties. The new idea here was the idea of *independent* study—research, writing, and teaching not subservient to religious dogma and not beholden to the interests of the state.

F. W. J. Schelling's design for the new university stressed "intellectual freedom, not shackled by scientifically irrelevant considerations." He sought to overcome the unthinking reliance on an inherited "erudition" that takes the place of "knowledge itself," and indeed "becomes an obstacle to true knowledge," which requires the contact of each science with "its original object." Universities, said Schelling, had become "no more than institutions for the transmitting of knowledge," but the "purpose for which they were founded" encompassed more: teachers were not just to communicate existing wisdom but "also to enrich science with discoveries of their own."

Each division of learning was now to consider its field "an end in itself." "The more a scholar conceives of his particular domain as an end in itself," Schelling believed, the more universities will achieve the rank of "real scientific institutions." Wilhelm von Humboldt, head of the Prussian education system, announced for the University of Berlin in 1809 "the principle that will become dominant in higher establishments of learning": *Wissenschaft als solche zu suchen*—"the pursuit of study as such," which is nothing less than a *new idea of learning.*

Consider, as an instance that is by no means atypical, the study of art. At earlier times, art had figured little in academia, showing up only where art provided material suiting projects higher and greater than a "study of art" undertaken for itself. Before the nineteenth century such an idea had occurred to no one. So what did it mean, in the lack of any such tradition, to be trained in such a study? What would this training focus on? What was the untutored amateur missing?

Each branch of study, answered Schelling, must pay attention to "its original object." But this is not the naïve "objectivity" pilloried by so many postmodern theorists. As Humboldt wrote in 1821, "Understanding is not merely an extension of the subject, nor is it merely a borrowing from the object; it is, rather, both simultaneously." In Humboldt's day, *Wissenschaft* was understood to mean "study," unfettered investigation pursued under Kant's motto of the Enlightenment: *Sapere aude!*—"Have the courage to use your own intelligence!" Don't be led; look and see. Study meant objectivity, taking a free look at the work of art, but

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these theorists also believed that this study was a new and improved medium of *Bildung*, that "formation" by which the individual attains his or her true human stature.

The Humboldtian university still upheld the ancient idea that education was about the shaping or cultivation of the person into a fully human being. "Everywhere the idea of the university, as it has developed in the last two centuries, concerns the transition from *doctrina* to *research*," says philosopher Hans-Georg Gadamer. "Taking part in scientific research is not however a preparation for a profession in which science is to be applied, but rather means 'education' [*Bildung*]." The ends of the modern university, then, had not changed, but the means were being revolutionized, and this is where trouble crept in. Humboldt's *Wissenschaft* was understood both to perpetuate the tradition of "liberal education" and at the same time to indicate a rigorous quality of research, more rigorous than what had reigned before philosophy had emphasized the study of a thing "in and for itself." Yet this more exacting study of things, this objectivity, is not altogether as self-evident as it sounds. "Good scientific method" was a rather vague concept, a poorly defined abstraction that readily attracted useful oversimplification at the expense of true education.

In the university's sudden focus on the effectiveness of specific sciences everything in the human studies changes, though this very transformation seems to be a simple, rational adjustment in the managing of the university's traditional purpose, liberal learning. This is a particularly fateful illusion. In the "professionalization" of university "disciplines," we have in fact the transition to a new idea in education: *method*. "Method" is a poorly understood concept, passing for a benign generality when in fact it possesses a distinct and pivotal specificity. It is a concept of *techne*. Wherever we have method, we have a condition of "legitimacy," and what it took to provide that legitimacy actually derailed the project of learning. To show this, we need merely return to Kant.

Kant concludes his *Critique of Pure Reason* with what he calls the "Doctrine of Method":

> Inasmuch as we have been warned not to venture at random upon a blind project which may be altogether beyond our capacities, . . . we must plan our building in conformity with the material which is given to us. . . . We have found, indeed, that although we had contemplated building a tower which should reach to the heavens, the supply of materials suffices only for a dwelling-house, just sufficiently commodious for our business.

In the emerging vision of a rational world, we would endorse as legitimate only those practices (such as medicine or the highly successful natural sciences) whose means are suited to their ends. Any discipline whose means cannot achieve its ends—Kant has in mind traditional metaphysics, but the rule is applicable to all science—will be identified as a failure and compelled either to improve its methods or fold up. Study, which aims to do justice to its objects, will now have to pass this test. What distinguishes the old study from the new? Not merely paying closer attention. Every viable form of science will submit to, as Kant put it, a "standard . . . whereby knowledge may be with certainty distinguished from pseudoscience."

This, it must be emphasized, is a turning point in the history of the university. It is nothing less than the involvement of education in a vast paradigm shift. In the nineteenth century, one now begins to hear, rather frequently, this reasonable term "method." Methods are not just procedures, but specifically cognitive procedures—procedures that aim to secure *knowledge*, that new thing which unites the multiplying branches of the modern university. Knowledge is the overarching concept of the university, and from the point of view of method, knowledge is a generic condition that can be successfully produced, in just the way that all the *technai* (said Aristotle) are fully fit to produce their goods. The university will make its knowledge well. Knowledge has now been technicized, understood as the "result" of specifically cognitive approaches, and the university is now the home of these approaches. It is the home—as Kant himself defined it—of "technicians of learning":

> Whoever it was that first hit upon the notion of a university and proposed that a public institution of this kind be established, it was not a bad idea to handle the entire content of learning . . . by *mass production*, so to speak—by a division of labor. . . . Only the scholar can provide the principles underlying their functions. . . . Accordingly they can be called the *business men* or technicians of learning.

This is one of the most profound reversals the history of education has ever seen. It is in fact the implosion of the idea of liberal knowledge, which is essentially opposed to all technique. The new idea, to repeat, is not the idea of the "advancement of learning," which we have already had from figures such as Francis Bacon. It is the systematic advancement of learning with reference to a "standard whereby knowledge may be with certainty distinguished from pseudoscience," a standard of cognitive legitimacy. Each science now conducts itself—assumes its place in the

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modern university—according to a universal requirement for knowledge credentials built upon a contrast with the dilettante.

To understand the business of knowledge—to understand what precinct the university now belongs to, and what education has now become—we need to look at how knowledge was reconceived in the nineteenth century. As John Henry Newman claimed in *The Idea of a University,* "A University . . . by its very name professes to teach universal knowledge." Knowledge—undifferentiated, divided into fields but no longer into Aristotelian types or kinds—ultimately winds up at the pinnacle of human achievement, and there it remains today. "It could be," says a PBS advertisement of recent years, "that we are here to remind each other of what is not to be missed or ignored but celebrated and, finally, known."

But it is one thing to bring together and protect different types of practice under a single roof, buffering them from the pressures of the world, as Kant had intended for the university in *The Conflict of the Faculties.* It is quite another to unite them all, technically, under a single concept. This Kant accidentally encouraged, and all those involved in shaping the modern university—Humboldt, Newman, John Stuart Mill—followed his lead, whether it was truly in their interest or not.

When Newman argues repeatedly for the idea of "knowledge as its own end," he appears to be restating the core defense of the liberal arts tradition that runs back to Aristotle and Socrates. But in fact he drives home an entirely new idea. For precisely while arguing for the centrality to the university of nonproductive forms of study (Aristotle called *sophia* "useless"), his own idea of the university embraces *every* branch of knowledge simply *as knowledge.*

> What an empire is in political history, such is a University in the sphere of philosophy and research. It is, as I have said, the high protecting power of all knowledge and science, of fact and principle, of inquiry and discovery, of experiment and speculation; it maps out the territory of the intellect, and speculation . . . and sees that the boundaries of each province are religiously respected. . . . It acts as umpire between truth and truth, and, taking into account the nature and importance of each, assigns to all their due order of precedence.

But with respect to what can the university protect the "power of all knowledge"? Newman explicitly rejects any submission of the sciences to a higher principle such as religion; he is a consummate defender of the separation of the disciplines. Each science serves knowledge by its own methods. Newman clearly sees the connection of method with the trades and professions (which is where the idea comes from), but he is also ready to believe in a method for knowledge itself. "I say then, if we would improve the intellect, first of all, we must ascend; we cannot gain real knowledge on a level; *we must generalize, we must reduce to method, we must have a grasp of principles, and group and shape our acquisitions by means of them*" (emphasis added). John Stuart Mill makes precisely the same alliance between liberal learning and this penetration into the structure of knowledge. For Mill, understanding how "the real facts of the world" are discovered, and "by what tests [man] can judge whether he has really found them," is "doubtless . . . the crown and consummation of a liberal education: but *before we restrict* a University to this highest department of instruction—before we confine it to teaching, not knowledge, but the philosophy of knowledge—we must be *assured that the knowledge itself has been acquired*" (emphasis added).

Knowledge in the nineteenth century came to function precisely like a manufactured product: it is a good, a well-made thing. At the same time, nineteenth-century thinking about knowledge was dominated by the Kantian categories of subjectivity and objectivity, and Kant's explanation of the dynamics of knowledge was indispensable to the modern academic who found himself under pressure from bourgeois society to demonstrate the genuine possession of a skill (his *method*)—the capacity to produce a "real knowledge" not obtained by the dilettante, just as the genuine physician (unlike the charlatan) produces real health. Kant inadvertently made that demonstration possible. Under the mounting modern pressure of success, Kant, "the liberator of science from all the metaphysical slag of rationalism," became, as Gadamer explains, "the guarantor of scientific philosophy": "philosophy became epistemology" and fleshed out a sound conception of "knowledge" for the age of technique.

Any prospective science could now show its power, justify its place, guarantee its legitimacy if it satisfied three conditions: first, if it maximized objectivity, in the sense of attention to the object; second, if "bad" subjectivity (like the commitment to certain conclusions prior to investigation) had been excluded from the study; and third, if (under the right conditions) the conclusions arrived at were evident not only to the scholar but to "everybody else" who considered the assembled case, which is precisely how Kant had characterized objective knowledge in natural science. Knowledge was to be publicly visible, confirmable by others in the same way that the report of a "warm room" is confirmable when the room is in fact warm. Knowledge has a profile, and the new human studies were designed to deliver on it.

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Why did this particular picture of knowledge gain currency? Not because of the natural sciences, or "positivism," but because of the rise of *techne*, the issue of technical success that the human sciences willingly embraced as their own. To the theorists of the modern university, the objects of the human studies (works of art or literature or philosophy or religion) would only be served better, known better, if we concentrated on the methods of knowing. The conception of knowledge outlined above was sucked into the humanities by their desire to measure up to productive *technai* like medicine and the natural sciences and achieve the same conditions of demonstrable productivity. And so these specific areas of inquiry were fraught with a particular problem that they would have to overcome.

In all the areas I began by discussing—philosophy, religion, literature, art—a genuine question existed as to whether knowledge was even possible. Is there even such a thing as "knowledge of art"? Today this question seems peculiar, but a century or more ago it was intelligent, for philosophy and religion had never been generators of knowledge as it was now defined, and the study of art and literature had never been university "subjects" at all.

Consider art. Art appears to *resist* the generation of knowledge, for studying it demands interpretation and interpretation is notoriously variable and far from knowledge-like. On top of this, examples abounded of a kind of subjective writing about art that could never be acknowledged by university dignitaries, and this put the study of art in a uniquely difficult position.

It was necessary to dispel suspicions that conclusions about art were merely speculative, to show that there was a serious difference between academic study and the writing of the dilettante and journalist. Art, as Leo Steinberg notes—and here it is not different from literature, or indeed philosophy and religion (when they aren't treated as history)—is an inherently problematic subject matter: "The attempts to cope with more private or more freely metaphorical and evasive aspects of art become professionally suspect. They tend to be left to art writers, popularizers, critics, psychologists—that is, to men who have neither the habits nor the responsibilities of the historian's hard-won methodology, so that their contributions to the literature of art serve to confirm the discredit of the whole enterprise."

But once knowledge had been clarified, as every proponent of the modern university wished, this problem vanished. New objective, anti-subjective questions are asked that fall in with the cognitive program, delivering visible "conclusions" that are entirely compatible with the accumulating results of the other sciences. For there was no room at the heart of modern, industrial society for an institution of the size and stature of the university that continued to hold itself above, in Benda's words, "the tendency to action, the thirst for immediate results, the exclusive preoccupation with the desired end." So within a century the "humanities" were transformed from the sum of all the varied projects of humanism and its rivals—the clarification of ideals, the pursuit of wisdom, the hunting and gathering of lots of truth, wherever truth might lay—into effective producers of a legitimated product across the entire spectrum of their self-appointed business, which was nothing less than the sphere of human creation itself.

The new kinds of questioning addressed to these creations transformed the humanities into reliable factories of a newly conceived knowledge and the universities into sources of skilled labor to run those factories. The technique that built the modern world—its machinery and bureaucracy and systems—would now produce its knowledge and understand its art with the same mentality as it weaved and fished and mined. But the new cognitive method that delivered this "knowledge of art" meant it was really a new *product*—new not merely in being rigorous and well-defined, but also in terms of its shape, its content, its field of engagement as well. For the first time, we have a knowledge about art or literature that is validated by everyone—that everyone can see *is* knowledge. For the first time, we have interpretations of religion and philosophy that are conceived with an eye for confirmation rather than in an uncertain dialogue with the interpreter. The whole encounter with a work of art unfolds in a new field of sense-making determined by what the group can see. No longer do I understand art or religion by approaching it with a question of life (necessarily, *my* life). What I need is an accessible, convincing argument. As Kant advised, the industry has tooled itself for "mass production."

The classic expression of liberal learning revolves around four issues. First, learning of the liberal sort is not training: it does not confer the know-how required to generate an outcome or fabricate a given product (as Aristotle put it, to "make" or produce something such as a bridle or a building). It is conducted because it is valuable in itself: it is a direct involvement, in Aristotle's scheme, with the self-justifying *telos* of the good, "what sorts of thing conduce to the good life in general," rather than an indirect involvement, as is the case with professional training. Second, it is supposed to help one live well, as both Newman and Mill argue. "Liberal Education," says Newman, "is simply the cultivation of the intellect, as such, and its object is nothing more or less than intel-

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lectual excellence; . . . for why do we educate, except to prepare for the world?" Writes Mill, "The claims which each [of the departments] has to a place in liberal education" depend upon "in what special manner they each conduce to the improvement of the individual mind and . . . how they all conspire to the common end, the strengthening, exalting, purifying, and beautifying of our common nature, and the fitting out of mankind with the necessary mental implements for the work they have to perform through life." Third, liberal education is not a body of knowledge that can be imparted to the student; it is the examination of the issues raised in various sources—an examination of texts that engages the student's thinking about these matters but does not merely implant the "answers" to the questions. These texts are not "taught"; they are read, and reading is dialectical. That is, the sources are "taken seriously," as when one listens to a person who may know something. In this personal dialogue the reader and the text address each other's questions. This is the reason why, fourth, liberal learning is oriented more to teaching than to research: there are no "gaps in the knowledge" of this form of learning; countless texts that answer the vital questions at the heart of each life already exist.

In the ancient schema of knowledge, liberal learning corresponds only to some of the five "modes of knowing" that, for Aristotle, combined to make the knowledge needed in a complete human life. What has to do most directly with the good is, in Aristotle and Plato, both *sophia* and *phronesis,* philosophic wisdom and practical wisdom. They are different from technical knowledge (*techne*), which is the productive knowledge imparted in training. The two forms of wisdom have to do with the good in respect of each person. With *phronesis* (having judgment in "things human") "there will be many wisdoms," since each person must make a different decision about what is to his or her "own advantage," given that individual's self-understanding and affinity for the good. With *sophia* (knowledge of the good in itself), all people will learn to recognize the good as their own particular nature fits them to do. In *phronesis* and *sophia* one finds all four themes of the liberal knowledge tradition: the good, life-oriented knowledge, process and not product, and a dialogue that each person must conduct for himself. Wrote Gadamer in his *The Idea of the Good in Platonic-Aristotelian Philosophy,* "Here, in the question of the good, there is no body of knowledge at one's disposal. Nor can one person defer to the authority of another. One has to ask oneself, and in so doing, one necessarily finds oneself in discussion either with oneself or with others."

The *technai,* however, were excluded by Aristotle from this territory: "Practical wisdom cannot be . . . art [*techne*]." The idea of the good must then be approached not by one road but by several, some of which are farther away from the good than others. How, then, did the modern university—the so-called home of liberal education—manage to rebuild itself on the technical model alone? The modern university, and precisely in the humanities, the very territory of liberal knowledge, shifted its interest from *phronesis* and *sophia* to technique, and thereby gave up, without even knowing it, the project of learning. The university betrayed that tradition, reducing it to the crudest interests of nineteenth-century progress. The university became, like a textile mill or a lumber yard, a depot for the whole of society, which was now enjoined (with liberal arts arguments) to pick up this well-made knowledge—merely having it would form the individual. There was a dignity in the possession of knowledge, no matter what the stuff had now become.

This idea of the dignity of knowledge sounds like the time-honored ideal of the liberal arts tradition, but it is not that idea, as thinkers like Newman fatally failed to note. By his embrace of the universal concept of "knowledge," Newman's own arguments sped the end of the tradition he admired. Newman was, precisely like Humboldt, a figure caught between two ages and engaged in the attempt to carry the ancient idea of formation, *Bildung,* civilization, the "ennobling of the character" (Schiller) into the modern age along the tightrope of technique—an unperformable feat.

In its own efficient fashion, technique has coursed through every vein of human life, and indeed could hardly have missed one. In the two hundred years in which it has swept the globe, transformed the landscape, dotted every room with stuff, ordered and refashioned human life, technique has certainly come to the aid of the human mind, as it has to human muscles, human vision, human pleasure, human dexterity. For the promise of technique in the modern period is absolute: there is in principle no desire for which the genie of method cannot be called upon. It was inevitable that the acquisition of knowledge would also be technicized, for in a technical age the very same things depend on it as depend on the gathering of ore and the netting of fish. I am certainly sympathetic to the idea of *The University in Ruins,* evoked by the late Bill Readings, but it is the wrong metaphor. The university was torn down and then richly rebuilt in the manufacturing sector, right in the midst of its chaos of values.

And not merely was the space of education left vacant by this generation of free-market goods, answering to no idea of human self-transformation. The creation of the modern university involves not the understanding of its objects but their effective

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expulsion from the endeavor of learning. By a remarkable irony, through this so-called knowledge, the tools that humankind has painstakingly fashioned for understanding and communicating what it means to be human, for recognizing what a human life demands—religious texts, works of philosophy, paintings, poems—have been hollowed and broken, so that we now "know" them only as the experts use them: as hooks for dead information. The *known* work of art is a testimony to facts that are as much use in direction-finding, in staying a course on the road of life, as a Hollywood movie or a swankier lawnmower.

The modern human sciences reduce the tradition to rubble because they transform the objects that were the very center of liberal learning into grist for the production of a general commodity. With modern knowledge we are not "satisfying a direct need of our nature in its very acquisition"—the idea of learning from Aristotle to Newman. Nothing can be done with this knowledge except to have it; it is simply that which we know, the material we keep in our heads. As Thomas Merton so eloquently put it, the modern person is one who "has no longer any knowledge of anything except himself, his machines, and his knowledge that he knows what he knows." The modern university itself inaugurates a new tradition in which the culture will now do without the real voice of philosophy, art, religion, myth, literature. What the educated person is now to learn is what the sciences produce; to be educated is to know what the disciplines deliver, and to be truly learned is to be busy making more.

Questions were once asked in the encounter with art, philosophy, Scripture, and poetry—questions about living. Before there were experts "an encounter with an author, character, plot, stanza, live or archaic torso," as Richard Rorty put it, could speak directly to a life question and make a difference to the reader's "conception of who she is, what she is good for, what she wants to do with herself." Where, in our society, do the answers to these questions come from? It is a question worthy of real reflection. How do we learn what to want? The university fails most not by ceasing to address such questions (with what could it now do that?) but by appropriating for its own merchandising purposes the tradition from which the answers come. The group-designed methods of knowledge that "legitimated" these disciplines do not take us anywhere near questions of this sort. And that is why it is the faculties of arts, which have come to equate knowledge with professionalized knowledge, and not the natural sciences that have destroyed education. Yale's Frank Turner uses the right language: "Here is the treason of the clerks at the close of the twentieth century." The modern university has replaced the sources of human life with its own amusing arguments and cases. What we have done, by handing these works to a realm of expertise, is to give technology an invitation to manage the territory of the soul. One might as well hand this task to Coca-Cola or Microsoft or General Motors or Disney.

The core of the university is not knowledge. There is no such thing as "knowledge," as something that can be attained (in an area like the human sciences) by controlled procedures, professionalism, "disciplinarity." Once "knowledge" in general has been both validated as an end in itself and identified as the product of appropriate means, the "liberal" arts have decisively lost their territory and are merely herded in with the "useful" arts in another sector of human life altogether.

Knowledge is a commodity; education, however, means learning. To learn from the sources, it is necessary *not* to "know" them. One has to go off alone with them, where there is no audience, where group conditions no longer hold, where one's real questions may be asked. The task of the human sciences is to create a social space for this thinking, in which the individual is not left alone. It is to provide a place for the student to talk through an understanding of the meaning of texts in their exact bearing upon the human journey. And it is to make this possible *against* the tide of the modern world: to show the limit of technique, to create an alternative to consumption as a mode of life, and to free the individual to ask real questions of the witnesses to real human life—poets and thinkers and artists. And therefore it is the task of the university to attack itself.

What we are looking at is the simple dribbling away of a long-lasting inheritance in the true understanding of knowledge, as something manifold and answering to all aspects of the human being. It would be one thing if the Aristotelian divisions of knowledge had been found wanting and were overturned—but there was no critique of the idea of a nontechnical knowledge, an idea at the very heart of the university tradition; the concept was simply dropped by the way, in the excitement of modernization, of perfected means. As each new publishing season shuffles the university syllabus, we can see, if we look, that technical culture has entirely won—rebuilt the world as a place of manufacture and consumption in which our own existing self-images and sympathies are simply reflected back at us, in the sad trick of advertising, and nothing speaks to the soul at all. "Not a knowledge of reality, but a knowledge of knowledge," as Thomas Merton put it. Take it all as the gift of "education," courtesy of the technicians of learning. FT

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In Defense of Immortality

Carol Zaleski

In 1904, less than six years before his death, William James made a revealing statement in response to a questionnaire circulated by his former student James Pratt. To the question, "Do you believe in personal immortality?" James answered, "Never keenly, but more strongly as I grow older." "If so, why?" "Because I am just getting fit to live."

Not a ringing endorsement perhaps, but James was sure of one thing: that the common arguments against immortality need not deter us. In his 1898 Ingersoll Lecture on Immortality, James set out with his usual relish to kick over the obstacles to belief. Chief among those obstacles was a general climate of learned doubt.

Our situation today is not so different. Although social surveys indicate that roughly 80 percent of Americans believe in life after death, it is a belief cherished against the grain of perceived official skepticism; and among academically trained religious thinkers, one finds a greater measure of skepticism than in the population at large. For many, immortality is not a matter for reasoned debate, but is simply ruled out of play, along with guardian angels and statues that weep. It is taken for granted, as if it were a premise accepted by all reasonable people, that no one seriously believes in Heaven, Hell, or Purgatory, in the life of the soul, the resurrection of the body, or the personality of God as the concrete realities they were once imagined to be.

One thinks especially of Rudolf Bultmann, who made it a cornerstone of his New Testament hermeneutics that the three-story structure of the cosmos (Heaven above, Earth in the middle, Hell below) is over, finished; it cannot be "repristinated." Similarly, Jürgen Moltmann began his 1967 Ingersoll Lecture by observing that the old ways of thinking about the future life "have dried up like fish in a drained pond."

More than any particular objections, this assumption that the traditional *mythos* can no longer speak to us weighs heavily against belief in immortality. The burden of proof shifts from the skeptic to the believer, and the believer finds that not only his reasons but also his motives are under suspicion. Belief in immortality begins to look shabby and self-serving, like something we fall back on in weak moments but rise above when we are at our best.

The specific objections to immortality are secondary, and can be briefly stated. Belief in immortality is criticized on moral grounds as self-aggrandizing, on psychological grounds as self-deceiving, and on philosophical grounds as dualistic. Concern for the soul is faulted for making us disregard the body, neglect our responsibilities to the Earth, and deny our kinship with other life forms. We share 90 percent of our genes with mice. Even the lowliest bacterium is our cousin. Why do we persist in imagining that there is some fifth essence in us that sets us apart?

To the first objection, we can say that there is no correlation between narcissism and belief in personal immortality. We feel the need for immortality most acutely when we are made sensible of the inexhaustible value of another person or the tragedy of a life cut short. None of the developed traditions about immortality fosters self-absorption. What are our images of eternal life if not ways of picturing a wider sphere of existence, a more generous personal life, less closed in upon ourselves, less fearful and grasping, more real in every respect? It is by contrast to the real person we hope to be in Heaven that we realize

CAROL ZALESKI *is Professor of Religion at Smith College. This essay is adapted from the Ingersoll Lecture on Immortality, given at Harvard Divinity School.*

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how self-absorbed we are most of the time here below.

As for dualism, much has been said of the violence it does to our unity as psycho-physical creatures, but this is questionable. Multiplicity and disunity are as strong a feature of our existence as psychosomatic unity. We are legion, as the demons say. It is a marvel that all our different parts work together. At best, we are a symphony; but the second violins have quarreled with the wind section, and as we age these quarrels increase. Why should it surprise us if at death the soul separates from the body? Separating is the order of our lives as we tend toward death. If a man's jowls can sink down while his brow stays up, why can't his soul rise up when his body sinks down? All of our flesh is being pulled downward by the gravity of the grave; every day our skin is sloughing off cell by cell; at each stage of life we slough off the skin of a previous stage; and at death we lose what was left of those skins. Perhaps that will be the chance to emerge as the person one was meant to be.

Against the charge that soul-talk is superfluous, there is the common witness of humanity that some language of this sort is necessary to capture the full range of human experience. Long after the human genome is completely mapped, and the neurophysiology of awareness and cognition thoroughly understood, we will still stand in awe before the mystery of consciousness and selfhood. We may be made in the image and likeness of a mouse, genetically speaking, but our kinship with the mouse is a kinship with life that is perishing. There remains an irreducible quality to our experience which tells us that we are not perishing with it, that we are also made in the image and likeness of Another, whose code is transcendent.

But if dualism troubles you—as it sometimes troubles me—there are non-dualistic ways of thinking about life after death. If you have studied classical Buddhist literature, you know that one need not be committed to a substantial soul in order to affirm the reality of persons, their identity over time, or their capacity for transcendence. Consciousness may be understood as an emergent phenomenon which, upon coming forth from its neural matrix, has the capacity to generate ever more complex structures of awareness, including an autobiographical sense of self. It can then be left to God to decide whether the self that emerges shall endure after its neural basis is destroyed. And once God is in the picture, the emergence of consciousness begins to look foreordained, as in the words to Jeremiah: "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you" (Jeremiah 1:5).

The more serious challenge to belief in immortality is an internal one, coming from biblical theology, from the varieties of liberation theology that have captured the flag of eschatology for this-worldly aims, and from existentialist religious thought with its emphasis on human finitude.

The biblical case against immortality-language is plain enough. Like other Ancient Near Eastern cultures, ancient Israel bisects reality into two overarching realms—the heavens and the earth—and two kind of beings—mortals and immortals. As the Psalmist says, "The heavens are the Lord's heavens, but the earth He has given to the sons of men. The dead do not praise the Lord, nor do any that go down into silence" (Psalm 115:16-17). To speak of human beings as immortal, to venerate them after death, or to conjure them by magic is to slide down the slippery slope toward the polytheism of Israel's neighbors. God's cult is the cult of the living, not of the dead.

Where intimations of eternal life do appear in the Hebrew Bible, they are driven by the same passion for monotheism and longing for communion with God that, at an earlier stage, had to exert itself against preoccupation (especially of a cultic sort) with the dead. Over time, though, it began to seem like an arbitrary limitation on God's power to confine it to the realm of the living. Is it right that there should be any realm where God's power is not felt? Is it not fitting that the martyrs who die in God's cause should be raised from the dust and regain their youthful splendor? Is it not proper that wise observance of the law should confer an enduring relationship to the maker of that law? These are but implications of the promise that God's righteousness will be vindicated, even in the face of suffering and death. They may not amount to a fully realized teaching on life after death, but they certainly can be viewed as preparation for such a teaching.

Step into the intertestamental period, however, and the picture begins to change dramatically. One encounters a stunning array of images of angelic metamorphosis, astral immortality, even apotheosis. What is impressive is not just the clear evidence of belief in a beatific afterlife for the just, but the giddy profusion of different ways to imagine that afterlife. Echoes of astral and angelomorphic immortality persist in the New Testament, rabbinic literature, early patristic writings, and Jewish mysticism, whence they enter the full stream of Jewish and Christian thought.

Some theologians have seen this rich array of images for eternal life as cause for alarm. In his 1955 Ingersoll Lecture, Oscar Cullman convinced his hearers, and a generation of theologians and pastors, that the language of immortality was unbiblical and sub-Christian. He sharpened the familiar distinction between immortality of the soul and resurrection of the dead by contrasting the serene death of Socrates

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to the anguished death of Jesus. In a didactic tour de force, Cullman set these two figures before us and said, "You must choose." If you affirm immortality of the soul, you make Easter superfluous. If your hope is in the resurrection, you should abstain from all talk of immortality.

Cullman's argument was electrifying. So striking was the contrast he drew that it was easy to miss his own efforts to qualify it. In fact he qualified it significantly, acknowledging that the post-Easter consciousness of the early Church gave all the appearance of a confident faith in immortality. This might be no more than a battle over semantics, were it not for one very real stumbling block: the interim period between the death of individuals and the general resurrection of the dead. Where are the dead? What are they doing? According to St. Paul, the dead are with Christ, and the Holy Spirit is their pledge of continued existence in God's hands. To convey this sense of continuity, the New Testament and early Christian sources employ a rich array of images, all of Jewish origin: the dead sleep or wake; they are in Sheol or in a place of heavenly refreshment, light, and peace; they are gathered to the fathers or resting in the bosom of Abraham; they are sheltered under the altar or hidden under the throne of God awaiting the final redemption. Cullman, following Luther, would have us select from this rich array only the single image of sleep, a tidy way to dispose of the doctrine of purgatory and to downplay if not completely efface the cult of the saints.

Of course, Cullman's lecture was just the tip of the iceberg. If there was any common agenda for the twentieth-century biblical theology movement it was to sort out Greek from Hebraic, individualistic from communal, dualistic from holistic, and otherworldly from this-worldly elements in biblical thought. Marked as it was by the compelling presence of Karl Barth, biblical theology could not ignore his insistence on the finality of death; it could not desert the theology of the cross for the allure of a theology of glory.

The revival of eschatology during the 1960s intensified the polemic. Eminent theologians like Jürgen Moltmann, Johan Baptist Metz, and Eberhard Jüngel, who envisioned eschatological hope as embodied in social and political *praxis*, were calling on Christians to close their ears to the siren song of immortality-language. Rejecting the medieval "four last things" model, which they judged to be individualistic, static, hierarchical, juridical, and hieratic, the eschatology movement emphasized the communal, dynamic, immanent, holistic, and future-oriented aspects of Christian hope. A similar impulse guided the implementation of the liturgical changes mandated for Catholics by Vatican II. Liturgical reformers sought to downplay individualistic, penitential, sacrificial, and otherworldly themes in favor of an ecclesiology of communion. Venerable ideas like the angelic presence at the liturgy and the Eucharist as medicine of immortality began to be an embarrassment. The lovely word *anima*, with all its bridal associations and evocations of mystical and ascetic life, was suppressed; and its vernacular counterpart ("soul") largely disappeared from translations of the Roman rite.

As is often the case with intellectual revolutions, these movements were splendidly right in what they affirmed, but dangerously wrong in what they denied. The eschatology movement recovered the Christological basis for hope, indeed brilliantly so in the case of Moltmann. Yet that recovery was undermined by those who would reduce it to political hope, or would empty out its concrete meaning with evasions like "resurrection in death." The liturgical reforms recovered the ideal of the whole Church as the body of Christ, but tended too often to reduce that ideal to a this-worldly model of egalitarian fellowship.

The result has been to flatten the symbolic cosmos in which the Christian imagination dwells, distancing modern believers from the great tradition of Christian literature, liturgy, and art. No longer can one read the Church fathers, the monastic tradition, the Anglican divines, indeed most of the spiritual classics of the Christian heritage without making mental reservations: "I must not allow myself to think along these lines; this is too Platonic, too dualistic."

Even more serious, if consistently applied, the refusal of immortality-language cuts off the community of the living from the community of the dead. It shakes the foundation of funeral and mourning customs. It makes the practice of praying for one's dead kin or praying to one's favorite saints lose its rationale. It renders absurd the innocent resolve of St. Thérèse of Lisieux: "I want to spend my heaven doing good on earth." This places theologians in the unenviable position of working to deny hope.

During the sixties and seventies, however, many eminent theologians were of the opinion that the ordinary folk in the pews no longer cared about life after death. We were finally done with such pie-in-the-sky considerations, they thought. Yet in 1975 Raymond Moody's book *Life After Life* appeared, soared to the top of the best-seller lists, and spawned a succession of immensely popular books on near-death experience, all promising to offer evidence for the immortality of the soul. The public hunger for this material was seemingly inexhaustible, and it shows no sign of abating.

How should we view this discrepancy between learned religious opinion and popular enthusiasm? Should we chalk it up to the narcissism of our culture, or should we consider the possibility that something

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has been missing from contemporary theology, that a fundamental and legitimate need has been going unmet? People are not satisfied by an eschatology that focuses exclusively on social justice; they are not convinced that individualism is the root of all evil; they are starved for transcendence, hungry for miracles, and sure of only one thing: if life is to be truly meaningful, death must not be allowed to have the last word. Under these conditions, to suppress immortality-language is indeed to deny hope.

The good news is that recent scholarship has progressed beyond the campaign to de-Platonize eschatology, and a more nuanced interpretation has come into view. Without denying the advances made in the last few decades, we are now in a position to reclaim the language of immortality. It is a good moment to rethink what immortality might mean; and a little reflection reveals that it can mean many things. Suppose we arrange these meanings along a scale. Several distinct types will emerge.

One model of immortality—let's call it Alpha—is immortality in its primary and obvious sense: physical invulnerability to death. It is an exceptional condition and not necessarily enviable: one thinks of the Mesopotamian flood hero Utnapishtim, the Taoist immortals, Dracula, the Wandering Jew. To be given everlasting longevity without being remade for eternal life is to live under a curse. It is Alpha immortality that Gilgamesh seeks in vain and Odysseus wisely rejects; and it is Alpha immortality that Paul Tillich condemns as another name for Hell.

Another type, Beta immortality, is immortality of the soul, understood as the soul's intrinsic invulnerability to death, an idea we associate with Plato and with classical Hindu thought. Here the soul is immortal because it is essentially perfect, self-sufficient, impassible, simple, beginningless, and beyond time. Your true self is already immortal; you have only to realize it through philosophical self-scrutiny or yogic self-mastery. Among the classic arguments for immortality, Beta favors the argument from the inherent nature of the soul. It is Beta immortality that Cullman believes has been smuggled into Christianity from Greek philosophy.

Gamma immortality is a variant of Beta immortality, in which the attainment of immortality is a particularly strenuous project requiring heroic spiritual exertion, specialized knowledge, or magical skills. It is a path open only to initiates, who learn to outwit the cosmic powers, forge a new adamantine body, and storm the gates of heaven. The twentieth-century movement known as the Gurdjieff work offers a Gamma immortality path.

Delta immortality is a variant of Beta immortality that belongs to the Enlightenment religion of reason. What is eternal in us, according to Delta immortality, is our capacity for moral reasoning, which reveals to us the natural law common to all cultures. The elixir of immortality is a liberal education that awakens one's powers of critical reason.

Delta immortality was the position taken early on by American Reform Judaism, as expressed in this official statement from the 1885 Pittsburgh platform:

> We assert the doctrine of Judaism that the soul is immortal, founding this belief on the divine nature of the human spirit, which forever finds bliss in righteousness and misery in wickedness. We reject, as ideas not rooted in Judaism, the beliefs both in bodily resurrection and in Gehenna and Eden as abodes for everlasting punishments and rewards.

In retrospect, it is easy to see why this softening of the demands of traditional eschatology was bound to fail. When the thorns are removed, a lot of the sap runs out with them. Immortality and resurrection, though distinct, have become so intertwined in Jewish and Christian thought as to be indecipherable apart from each other. When a Jew or Christian rejects belief in resurrection, what remains is an abstraction that resembles Beta immortality only superficially, for it is without *mythos* or *askesis*. It is reduced to a metaphor for the transcendent value of our animating ideals.

But Delta immortality still has its champions. Its chief appeal today is that it solves the problem of pluralism; its chief weakness, and a sign of its Enlightenment pedigree, is its disregard for the divergent claims of the historic religious traditions.

Epsilon immortality is yet another variant of Beta immortality, found in modern theosophy and spiritualism. It has many points in common with Delta immortality, but it is monistic rather than dualistic. Spirit is rarefied matter; energy, electricity, and magnetism are the key metaphors. The translation to eternity, or at least to the next world after this one, occurs by way of an emanated subtle body that carries with it in replica nearly everything to which we are attached: our personalities, our familiar appearance, our clothing, even our pets.

Zeta immortality, which combines features of Delta and Epsilon immortality, conceives of the future life as an archetypal or imaginal world, along the lines suggested by Carl Jung and Henry Corbin. At death each person experiences the ultimate mystery in the form he or she most deeply desires and expects. On an imaginalist reading, all otherworld visions are true. But are they true enough? For classical Hinduism as for classical Greece, for Buddhists and Taoists as for Muslims, Christians, and Jews, immortality means awakening

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from the world of shadows. If death is the doorway to a realm of dream palaces and docetic theophanies, then it hardly seems worth the trouble of dying.

Skipping over other variations that may occur to us, we arrive at Omega immortality, the central insight of Jewish and Christian eschatologies. It has two main premises: that human beings are creatures, composites of dust and God's animating breath; and that they are created in the image and likeness of God, with a destiny—a royal dignity—that overtakes their finite status. They hope to see God, not because of their merit or strength, but because He has made them and stamped them with His image. To be immortal, then, is to be a mortal who has a share in God's immortality (1 Timothy 6:16); conversely, to be estranged from God is death—or "second death," which is either annihilation or a particularly wretched form of Alpha immortality.

The keynote of Omega immortality, for both Jews and Christians, is that it is a sheer gift. Adam and Eve may or may not have possessed immortality before their exile from the Garden, but if they did possess it, it was by grace and not by right. Hellenistic Jewish wisdom literature attributes immortality first to God and then only by participation to the wise man who observes God's law. Similarly, when Christian theologians like Gregory of Nyssa, Gregory the Great, and Thomas Aquinas affirm the soul's natural immortality, they do so from within the horizon of Omega immortality: our nature itself is a gift; it's a gift all the way down.

The gift of Omega immortality is the perfecting of the divine image and likeness in man, known as *theosis* in the Christian East. This perfecting, coming as it does from a higher power, differs significantly from the Beta immortality ideal of self-mastery even though it bears some of the same marks of tranquillity and freedom from passions. When Anthony the Great comes forth from his twenty-year seclusion, looking for all the world like a Cynic or Stoic sage, in perfect equilibrium and health, what radiates from him is the reflected light of Christ, not a brilliance of his own making; he is an Omega immortal.

Of the classic arguments for immortality, the one most suited to Omega immortality is the argument from desire. God has created human beings with spiritual and moral capacities, and therefore with good desires, that will be left unfulfilled if death is the end. Our reason and our piety are offended by such waste. Hence it seems only fitting that the God who uttered the spell of creation would reverse the spell that binds us to death.

Another kind of evidence for immortality can be found in the lives of the saints whose deification or sanctification by the Holy Spirit is the beginning of the great work that God will complete with the resurrection of the dead. In St. Paul's words, the activity of the Holy Spirit in this life is the first installment of immortality. Omega immortality is the life of the world to come, already partially realized in the communion of saints both living and dead. Its effects are not confined to a circle of illuminati orbiting the divine throne, but spill over to all souls both living and dead who are—like William James—"just getting fit to live."

Omega immortality is a universal vocation, but not a settled fact. It always has a dimension of longing and expectancy. The anthropology proper to Omega immortality is an ecstatic one. It is shaped like the Triune God, self-giving rather than self-contained. When monastic writers speak of the soul as a cloister or cell, what they describe is not an inner chamber enclosed upon itself, but a cloister that opens out to a cathedral, a cell that turns into a bridal chamber, a bridal chamber that will one day be a banquet hall. This was also Augustine's great insight: my self exceeds itself, I become myself only when I give myself away. The best use I can make of myself is to offer myself as a sacrifice, in life and in death; at death I go up to the altar of God, and it is God who renews my youth.

Death is real for Omega immortality. At death, "we are like water spilt on the ground, which cannot be gathered again" (2 Samuel 14:14). Or rather, we are like water spilt on an altar stone, like a sacrificial libation poured into God's hands. The pledge of survival of death resides not in the integrity of our personality or our memory, nor in any other ontological glue. Therefore, we need not feel threatened by reductionist accounts of the human person nor by the paradoxes of identity and memory that dog philosophical doctrines of immortality. Of course we will disintegrate at death, just as we have been disintegrating all our lives. At death we will descend into the land of the shades, but will discover that God is already there. He has kept our memories for us, and waits to restore them to us, now purified and made real. He holds the secret of our identity, which we misplaced around the age of three. How will I know it is the same me, if I have no subjective certainty of continuity, and no external guarantees? I will know it is the same me because I will see the same Him.

This point has been illustrated for me by a game my four-year-old is always playing with me. He pretends to be a baby animal; but he never remains the same baby animal for long. He always uses the same words to introduce this game: "You're a person, and I'm your baby velociraptor." A moment later, it's "You're a person and I'm your baby porcupine" or "You're a person and I'm your baby mouse." Andy can change identities

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at will, but I must always be the "Person," the maternal polestar who remains fixed so that he can change.

For Christianity, that polestar is Christ, the archetypal person, the mirror in which the full extent of human possibility can be seen. Omega immortals do not possess their own immortality but are possessed by it, as it radiates from the risen Christ. They experience their beatitude on loan, so to speak, from the fullness of eternity that will be theirs only with the resurrection to glory. Their immortality is not timeless like Beta immortality, but comes stamped with a date, a certain Sabbath, Holy Saturday, when Christ invaded the realm of death and rescued Adam and Eve. The effects of Holy Saturday flow backward to beginning times and outward beyond the inner circle of the saints toward the larger company of mortal pilgrims and strangers.

The classical Christian view, expressed in countless catechisms and confessions, is that upon death the souls of the blessed enter immediately into the divine presence, where they enjoy the unmediated vision of God, join in the angelic liturgy, and attend to the needs of the living who turn to them for intercession. In restful industry and industrious rest, they await the return of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the renewal of all creation. Their bliss is perfect after its kind; but until the soul regains its body, and the whole body of Christ is complete in all its members, this perfection is, paradoxically, an unfinished work.

An analogy may be found in the Mahayana Buddhist *bodhisattva* ideal. If we take our cue from the *Vimalakirti-nirdesa Sutra*, the *bodhisattva* is a fully awakened being for whom it is an implication of his perfect enlightenment (rather than a postponement of it) that he remain in solidarity with all who are afflicted by illness and ignorance, birth and death. Similarly, the beatitude of the Christian saint entails the altruistic wish that all may be saved, death vanquished, hell emptied. For the locus of Omega immortality is not the individual soul per se, but the complete society created by God's love, in which individuality is realized in fellowship.

In this respect, all fully developed teachings about immortality gravitate toward the Omega end of the scale. Plato locates beatitude in the polis rather than in a private interior realm, and in their mature form all religions tell us that ultimate fulfillment will be found not in self-sufficiency but in fellowship. From this perspective we can appreciate the idea common to so many religions that the dead may benefit from having the merit of others transferred to their own account: salvation is corporate.

The special genius of Omega immortality is that it never lets us forget that beatitude must be both individual and social, both theocentric and anthropocentric. We learn this from the famous scene in the *Confessions*, where Augustine and his mother anticipate the joys of the blessed in heaven. As they lean against a window overlooking a garden in Ostia, the conversation of mother and son becomes so exalted that they begin to ascend toward "that Wisdom by which all things are made"—and then, "for one instant attain to touch it." This is no flight of the alone to the Alone; it has to be recounted in first person plural. Comrades in rapture, Monica and Augustine have experienced something like a foretaste of the beatific vision as enjoyed in the communion of saints.

How does one rehearse for such a vision? The best way is through liturgical adoration, which recapitulates the vision of God in the Temple and anticipates the vision of God on His Throne. The Psalms are full of hints about this. The presence of God in the sanctuary establishes a relationship against which death cannot prevail; hence it is logical that when notions of a beatific afterlife eventually begin to develop, they should take a liturgical shape.

The liturgy gives us our best and most complete picture of Heaven, portraying the life of the blessed as a choral and complex affair in which solitary and communal elements are fused. One joins in adoration with angels and saints, with the dental hygienist and the mailman, daring to borrow from the seraphim the chant Isaiah overheard: "Holy, Holy, Holy." The divine liturgy on Earth mirrors the cosmic liturgy in Heaven, even as it recapitulates sacred history. If ever there was realized eschatology, it is here.

Therefore if we wish to decide whether Omega immortality is an intelligible idea, we have only to ask ourselves whether perpetual adoration is an intelligible ideal. Is our chief end to glorify God and enjoy Him forever, as the old catechisms say? Is G. K. Chesterton right when he says that "all human beings, without any exception whatever, were specially made, were shaped and pointed like shining arrows, for the end of hitting the mark of Beatitude"?

On this view, our inclination to adore God is constitutive; it is written into our whole being. It is not merely a subjective need, but rather a need so completely interwoven throughout our rational, moral, spiritual, and sensible nature that if it is illusory, then we are comprehensively false, we are creatures of *mauvaise foi*. One can imagine an "argument from adoration" for immortality. The object of adoration who made us to adore Him—can His will be utterly frustrated by death? Can His justice be thwarted by death? Can His love be defeated by death? Must we understand the details before we can believe that He will vanquish death?

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Our ancestors were afraid of Hell; we are afraid of Heaven. We think it will be boring. But adoration cannot be boring, for one is gazing at the face of the beloved, and the face of the beloved is inexhaustible. We find it hard to imagine the kind of happiness that might flow from a condition of perfection. The very idea of perfection has become alien to us. We prefer to speak of "human flourishing," an open-ended ideal that incorporates change and imposes no absolute standards. As an ideal, perfection produces anorexics and martinets, we think; only the "spirituality of imperfection" can promote human flourishing. But this is to confuse perfection with perfectionism; *true* perfection is evergreen and alive, including within itself everything that we value about change.

A further stumbling block is that adoration entails submission, both to the object of adoration and to the tradition that leads us to it. Submission is not a popular idea, especially where Christianity is concerned. I had a student tell me she had rejected her childhood Christian faith because of its emphasis on humility and self-abnegation; she then took up with a Buddhist group whose practice involved making hundreds of prostrations. The prostrations felt good! Perhaps this is a clue that adoration—when the object is truly worthy—puts our powers to proper use. It is a self-emptying posture, but also a stance filled with dignity and joy, the very opposite of groveling before a tyrant or an *idée fixe.*

If adoration is the chief end for which we were made, we would be well served by a tradition that helped us to picture that end, making it imaginatively plausible. Historically, both Judaism and Christianity have done just that, wisely tolerating a great variety of images for eternal life, and requiring only that the nonnegotiables, the essential insights, are preserved. Some of these images originate with Alpha or Beta versions of immortality; but if so, they are altered by their new context. The imagery of esoteric initiation, ritual purgation, the flight of the alone to the Alone, alchemical elixirs, spells for ascending to Heaven, and passwords for getting past the guardians of the planetary spheres—all take their turn to express the mystery of entry into eternal life.

Similarly, Omega immortality is hospitable to diverse images for the resurrection of the dead, from the seed imagery of St. Paul to the exhumation imagery of medieval piety. But this brings us to another aspect of Omega immortality that is, if not counterintuitive, then countercultural: its strangeness, in association with the bodily resurrection. Admittedly it is bizarre to think of martyrs' bodies being regurgitated at the time of resurrection by the beasts that devoured them—but is it any more bizarre than birth, when compared to the more decorous view that finds babies under cabbage leaves? As George Santayana says, the fact of being born is a bad augury for immortality. But it makes anything else seem possible! This was the apologists' main defense of the resurrection and it is still a good one—that with God, all things are possible.

The plurality of images and conceptions of eternal life is a normal function of the religious imagination. In fully realized religious cultures, however, the religious imagination is not capricious. It obediently serves and unfolds the central insights; it is handmaiden to what is received by a community as the truths of its faith. It is subject to correction, but wise masters of discernment know when such correction is necessary and are very cautious about exercising it.

We may prefer to view images of life after death as metaphors for the transcendent dimension of human existence. This is right, but it is not enough. Talk of the transcendent dimension is effective only as long as it continues to have a purchase on a concrete and living myth of the other world, a "true myth," to use J. R. R. Tolkien's expression. We can live by a vague creed only because our ancestors lived by a definite one; we can develop a second naiveté only if we still have access to the first one. We have been living off the capital of a concretely supernaturalist worldview. Once that capital is spent, however, our abstractions will seem like thin fare.

The iconoclasts among us would like to limit the ration of images we may use to anticipate what Jonathan Edwards calls God's ineffable manifestations of love; yet there are times when even the most childish analogies can be of service. Take, for example, Elizabeth Stuart Phelps' novel, *The Gates Ajar* (published in 1868 when she was only twenty-four), which portrays a Heaven of the most domestic and sentimental kind. In one scene, a little girl named Faith is describing her vision of Heaven to a friend: "P'r'aps I'll have some strawberries too, and some ginger-snaps—I'm not going to have any old bread and butter up there—O, and some little gold apples, and a lot of playthings; nicer playthings—why, nicer than they have in the shops in Boston . . . ! God's keeping 'em up there a purpose." A short while later, Faith's mother explains why she encourages such fancies: "I treat Faith just as the Bible treats us, by dealing in *pictures* of truth that she can understand. . . . If I told her that her heavenly ginger-snaps would not be made of molasses and flour, [she] would have a cry, for fear that she was not going to have any ginger-snaps at all; so, until she is older, I give her unqualified ginger-snaps."

I have been trying to suggest that *qualified* ginger-snaps may be a better diet for us than no ginger-snaps at all. FT

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Books In Review

Player in a Cosmic Drama

Pontius Pilate. By Ann Wroe. *Random House. 412 pp. $26.95.*

***Reviewed by* Charlotte Allen**

Next to Julius Caesar, Pontius Pilate—the governor of Judea who sent Jesus to the cross—is probably the best-known Roman citizen who ever lived. His name is etched into the Christian creeds, prompting some fallen-away Christians to quip that "crucified under Pontius Pilate" is the only article of Christian faith that they still find believable.

Pilate is also the most vivid secondary figure in the Gospel passion stories, dithering over what to do with a man who is clearly no political threat but who has powerful enemies who will report Pilate's name to Tiberius Caesar and also start a riot, a blot on Pilate's administrative record, if he does not get rid of Jesus promptly. Pilate thus strikes a curiously modern—and for us fellow-moderns, affecting—note for an ancient personage. He is the consummate careerist, for whom the free fall of downward social mobility is the most frightening of all prospects, just as it is in our own socially fluid time.

In the Gospels, Pilate wrestles with his conscience over Jesus, but (again in a fashion that strikes us as all too familiar) essentially tries to weasel out of the problem in the hope that it will resolve itself. In Luke's Gospel, he invokes a jurisdictional technicality to ship the Galilean Jesus out of his purview and into that of the Galilean kinglet Herod Antipas—who is far too clever to play the tar-baby target and so lobs Jesus right back. In John's Gospel, Pilate entangles himself in a dense philosophical/theological conversation with Jesus during which he utters his haunting query, "What is truth?" He does not "stay for an answer," as Francis Bacon famously put it, because saving his soul is far less important to him than saving his political hide. The Pilate who in John's Gospel vainly hopes the crowd will feel Jesus' pain—and spontaneously acquit him—if he has the Galilean brutally flogged and displayed to the crowd with the words, "Behold the man," cannot help but resonate with the hide-protecting, split-the-difference sensibility of our timorous times.

Furthermore, Pilate has a wife. In Matthew's Gospel, she plays a brief but riveting role in Jesus' trial that turns it into a drama of the sexes, among many other things. At the very last minute she sends word to Pilate as he is about to pass judgment, warning him to "have nothing to do with this innocent man, for today I have suffered a great deal because of a dream about him." This mysterious message—ignored by Matthew's Pilate as the mob rumbling for Jesus' death threatens to get out of hand—enhances our fascination with the Judean governor. Christian tradition quickly gave Pilate's wife a name, Claudia Procula, and an aristocratic provenance, so that her parvenu husband was viewed as having married up, with all the tensions and awkward marital balance of power that such a situation entails. As the centuries passed, the folklore of Christians who were as fascinated as we are by the Pilates embroidered their marriage with rich detail. In the mystery plays of the medieval West, Procula became a sumptuously attired layabout who spent most of her waking hours in the bed where she had her famous dream.

Ann Wroe's *Pontius Pilate* is in part an effort to write the biography of the official whose public and private life has engendered two millennia of wild speculation. As she acknowledges in her preface, this is a nearly impossible task. Pilate's ten-year career, from A.D. 26 to 36, as prefect of Judea (his territory also included Samaria to the north and Idumea to the south) was fairly well documented (although with only two passing references to Jesus) by the Jewish historian Flavius Josephus. Josephus describes an impatient, imperious minor poobah, a creature of the Emperor Tiberius, who shares the characteristically Roman distaste for all things Jewish in his hardscrabble province. The Jews of Judea, who only twenty years before Pilate's arrival had had their own kings (albeit those brutish puppets, the Herods), detested direct Roman rule. Many longed for the return of the monarchy, preferably in the form of the Messiah, or Christ ("anointed one"), King David's heir. There were a number of nastily suppressed religio-political rebellions in the name of leaders who claimed or were thought to claim messianic status.

Pilate's job was to keep order, period, while waiting for Tiberius to award him a more prestigious posting in, say, Syria or Egypt. During his ten years in office, according to Josephus, Pilate was far from the worst Roman governor the Jews had seen, but he managed, deliberately or no, to provoke several bloody skirmishes with religious Jews who resented, for example, his bringing Roman standards, which had pagan sacral associations, into the holy city of Jerusalem. In 36, Tiberius recalled Pilate to Rome, after Pilate's troops massacred a crowd of followers of a Samaritan prophet. The Jewish philosopher and civic leader Philo of

Charlotte Allen *edits the Catholic page for Beliefnet.com, a website devoted to religion, spirituality, morality, and ethics. She is the author of* The Human Christ: The Search for the Historical Jesus *(Free Press).*

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Alexandria wrote a broadside against Pilate describing him as "inflexible, stubborn, and cruel" and accusing him of all manner of violent acts against the Jews, including executions without trial. Philo was not known for his impartiality toward Roman governors, so we do not know how much truth there was to the most extreme of his allegations against Pilate. In fact, we know nothing more at all about Pilate, including what happened to him after 36, or where he came from and what he was doing before 26. Wroe writes:

> We do not even know his praenomen, the name his mother and wife and friends called him by. The only physical evidence we have of this man is one inscribed stone and a few small coins. All the records he kept, as he was bound to keep them, have disappeared. . . . The only documentary sources for Pilate are a few paragraphs in the writings of Josephus, a Romanized Jew who wrote forty years after the governor was recalled from Judaea; two or three pages from Philo of Alexandria, a defiantly non-Romanized Jew and one of Pilate's contemporaries; one sentence in Tacitus, looking back from the time of Hadrian; and those all too familiar scenes from the New Testament. All these have their biases. Each offers a version of Pilate's character, but so wrapped in propaganda or agendas that it is difficult to detect what, if anything, may be true in them.

Wroe's approach to Pilate's biography, therefore, is a kaleidoscopic one that explores the above sources together with the dense sediments of oral and literary lore that time and Christian tradition have deposited upon the Roman governor's exiguous historical record. Her sources for the latter include Greek and Coptic apocryphal Gospels, Ethiopian calendars, medieval mystery plays, folktales from every corner of Europe, Victorian lives of Christ, and such contemporary classics as Mikhail Bulgakov's *Master and Margarita*, in which a novel about Pilate plays a pivotal part.

As a scholarly and literary enterprise, Wroe's book is vastly satisfying. Although she is neither a biblical scholar (thank God, one might interject) nor a classics expert, she has a doctorate in history from Oxford University, and she has worked for years as the literary and now the American section editor of the *Economist*, and so brings a lively journalistic sensibility to her materials and a sensitivity to their contemporary relevance. She is also a fervent Catholic and a columnist for the *Tablet*, the London Catholic magazine, and Christian meditation permeates her narrative.

The writing in *Pontius Pilate* is consistently superb, as Wroe teases thread after thread of poetic meaning, from, for example, the Anglo-Saxon legend that the same cock (a symbol of Pilate himself, as Wroe later proposes) that Peter heard crow when he betrayed Christ overflew Judas as he hanged himself:

> Its wings were the onset of night itself, its spurs and eyes the stars. The cockerel was the bridge between the night of the arrest and the morning of the Resurrection: it marked the end and the beginning of the world. Its cry humiliated Peter as he sat in the tavern, reminding him that he had denied Christ and that the movement had fallen apart; but it also accompanied the women as they made for the tomb at dawn. Night fell, the cock crowed, the day appeared. This bird was no spectator, but an agent in the story; this bird might indeed believe, as the children's poem has it, that his crowing made the sun rise.

THESE FEATS OF interpretation occasionally segue into flights of overinterpretation. Wroe's efforts to tie the story of Jesus' passion to contemporary events—lengthy tropes comparing Judas to a Castroite spy in Havana or Jesus' band of disciples to abortion protesters—are imaginative and well-intentioned, but they stray too far afield from her main subject. She also tends to turn Jesus' ministry into a rather more organized social force than the Gospels and other sources warrant. Thus she writes, as above, that "the movement had fallen apart." The New Testament does not indicate that there was ever a Jesus "movement" to begin with until after Easter and Pentecost. Before that, there was only Jesus, those whom he called to follow him, and the crowds that sometimes trailed him enchantedly and sometimes turned murderously against him.

Wroe is most compelling when she mines Roman sources to tell us what Pilate, as a provincial Roman official who owed his career to the emperor Tiberius, was probably like: what sort of education he received from his Greek tutors, what he wore and ate, and even how he fixed his hair. Pilate's family, the Pontii, most likely originally hailed from Samnium, a rustic mountain redoubt south of Rome whose inhabitants had once been Roman allies until they mounted a losing war against Rome from 86-82 B.C. The Romans crushed and slaughtered the Samnite nobility, including most of the Pontii. The few survivors ended up as second-class Roman patricians—their rank was that of knight, not senator—who were famous for their military valor but depended for their livelihoods on the patronage of the better-born.

Pontius Pilate probably had to grovel to Lucius Aelius Sejanus,

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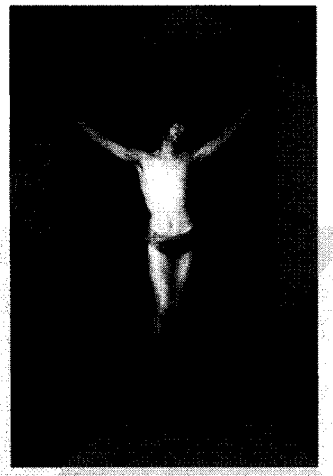
MEDITATIONS ON THE LAST WORDS OF JESUS FROM THE CROSS



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Tiberius' intimate and the commander of the Praetorian Guards who formed the emperor's thuggish personal army. Sejanus poisoned some of his political rivals and arranged the arrests and deaths of others, until his ambitions began to alarm the emperor. In A.D. 31, around the time of Jesus' death, Tiberius had Sejanus executed. "We have no king but Caesar," Jesus' Jewish enemies declare in John's Gospel—and one can imagine Pilate's icy sweat.

Wroe is thus able to paint a picture of Pilate that is fairly consistent from source to source. The Pilate of the Gospels is not very different from the Pilate of Josephus and Philo: superstitious and short-fused, terrified of offending Rome, and prey to every anti-Jewish prejudice his Roman social superiors held. There has been a tendency among some New Testament scholars to view the Evangelists as having whitewashed Pilate in order to blame the Jews for Jesus' death. Wroe's portrait of the governor is of a far more complex personality who was surely no saint, even in the Gospels. (Indeed, although the Coptic church canonized Pilate after he reportedly repented of his sins, in Western folklore he became a bogeyman, as feared as Satan, and in the mystery plays he was a villain.)

In the end, Wroe's view of this deeply flawed man is closest to that of the evangelist John: he was a key player in a cosmic drama that entangles human history in a script of divine salvation. She writes: "It was symbolically necessary that Christ should die at the coming of the spring, not at any other time; that he should die on a tree, not in any other way; and that he should not merely hang there, as on a gibbet, but extend his arms like branches with the sap of his blood flowing from his hands. Only Pilate could effect that. Only he could provide the tau-shape of the cross, the Egyptian sign of life, on which life could be proclaimed through the act of death. His role was to be the winter to Christ's spring."

The Limits of Natural Teleology

NONZERO: THE LOGIC OF HUMAN DESTINY. By ROBERT WRIGHT. *Pantheon. 436 pp. $27.50.*

***Reviewed by* William A. Dembski**

IN *Nonzero* Robert Wright argues convincingly that certain patterns in biological and cultural evolution cannot properly be attributed to contingency or accident but rather point to an underlying teleology—for him, a fully naturalized teleology. Most teleologies of the past have looked to some entity or principle beyond the strictly material and physical. Bossuet's universal history guided by providence, Hegel's phenomenology of spirit, Bergson's élan vital, and Teilhard de Chardin's omega point —all invoked quasi-mystical elements. Wright wants none of this. Instead, he wants a teleology acceptable to the most hard-core of scientific materialists.

Wright's naturalized teleology unites two theories: Darwinism and game theory, the latter a mathematical theory widely employed in the social sciences (especially economics). Wright is neither a biologist nor a mathematician, and he never explains or justifies these theories, being content to presuppose them and apply them as broadly as possible.

Wright's naturalized teleology works as follows. Organisms, whether

WILLIAM A. DEMBSKI *is a fellow of the Center for the Renewal of Science and Culture at the Seattle-based Discovery Institute. His latest book is* Intelligent Design: The Bridge Between Science and Theology.

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evolving biologically or culturally, face pressures that can hinder them from leaving offspring. For biological evolution the offspring are genes; for cultural evolution they are "memes" (this coinage by Richard Dawkins denotes a basic unit of cultural information, e.g., a religious doctrine). The essential characteristic of organisms is reproduction, and what they reproduce are genes (through biological reproduction) or memes (through cultural dissemination). Genes and memes, according to Wright, constitute an organism's enduring heritage.

NOW THE QUESTION most on Wright's mind is how specific genes and memes emerge, become prominent, and ultimately dominate a gene or meme pool. For Wright the answer always devolves to the interplay between Darwinian natural selection, zero-sum games, and non-zero-sum games. According to Wright there is a well-defined logic to this interplay. Initially there's a zero-sum game, that is, an interaction between organisms where one's loss is another's gain. Zero-sum games place enormous stress on an organism and lead it to seek support from fellow organisms that are, as Wright puts it, "in the same boat."

Organisms in the same boat, facing common external pressure, do best by rowing in sync—in other words, by cooperating. In the language of game theory, they now need to play a non-zero-sum game where what benefits one benefits others. Those non-zero-sum solutions that best benefit the group will then be selected since they lead to the survival and flourishing of the group. Such solutions include novel biological structures and technological innovation. According to Wright this is how novel genes and memes are generated.

Let us call this interplay between Darwinian selection, zero-sum games, and non-zero-sum games Wright's "nonzero dynamic." According to Wright, the nonzero dynamic confers a direction on biological and cultural evolution by leading to increased complexity over time—the teleology in Wright's scheme.

To see how complexity emerges from Wright's nonzero dynamic, consider his favorite metaphor to describe the nonzero dynamic: an "arms race." An arms race is a zero-sum game between two (or more) nations that leads to a non-zero-sum game within a nation as it desperately seeks to produce the most effective countermeasures against its common enemy. For Wright all biological

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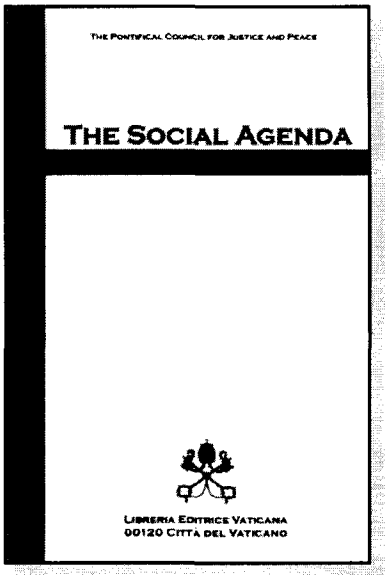

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and cultural progress consists in innovating successful countermeasures according to the nonzero dynamic.

Let's look at one example of this dynamism at work in biology. Bombardier beetles squirt a hot noxious fluid at predators, a trick that evolved under pressure from predators who would otherwise devour them. But what about the predators who can now no longer devour these beetles and whose livelihood is now in jeopardy? In some cases they evolved novel behaviors for causing the beetle to discharge its fluid harmlessly and thus render it vulnerable. The next round in the arms race may feature an adaptation that improves the beetle's hot-noxious-fluid delivery system.

This example concerns biological evolution, but according to Wright his nonzero dynamic applies equally well to cultural evolution. Everything from political systems to religious ideas to technological advances is explained by the nonzero dynamic. One political system gives way to another because it cannot handle new challenges. One religion gives way to another because it can no longer make sense of the world. One technology gives way to another because it can no longer keep pace with our needs. According to Wright, the nonzero dynamic drives innovation and thereby continually enriches and regenerates the world.

Wright sees the nonzero dynamic as a positive force in history. In purchasing increased complexity over time, biological and cultural evolution also purchases increasingly complex networks of what Wright calls "non-zero-sumness." (For Wright this word, more than any other, captures what his book is about—he even wanted to make it the title, though prudence, and editors with an ear for the English language, ultimately dissuaded him.) Complex innovations require complex organizational structures to produce them. Thus, according to Wright, the nonzero dynamic leads inexorably to increasingly larger webs of interconnectedness, of which the World Wide Web is currently our most notable example. Moreover, once a web of interconnectedness playing a non-zero-sum game becomes global, some degree of universal cooperation is achieved.

But Wright is not a utopian. Although the push of the nonzero dynamic is toward increased cooperation, historical contingency can always derail non-zero-sumness in any given instance. The nonzero dynamic is probabilistic and statistical; it says where history as a whole is heading without guaranteeing where any item of history may end up. According to Wright, humans may well destroy themselves in a nuclear holocaust. But if so, a new species will take its place, one that attains our level of intelligence but is more adept at enabling universal non-zero-sumness to prevail. The message of Wright's book is, to paraphrase John Lennon, "give non-zero-sumness a chance."

Here, then, is Wright's grand vision. What can be said about it by way of criticism? Perhaps the most well-known criticism comes from Stephen Jay Gould, who in works that predate Wright's argues that biological and cultural evolution is thoroughly contingent—that if the tape of history were replayed, not only would we not be here, but nothing like us would be here. Nonetheless, the pattern of convergence in biological and cultural evolution seriously undermines Gould's contingency claim. The same sorts of biological structures and cultural artifacts keep being reinvented. Eyes have been reinvented dozens of times in the course of evolutionary history. And how many times has the wheel been invented in human history?

A different line of criticism begins with what philosopher David Lewis calls an "incredulous stare." Whatever the arguments pro or con, it is simply too much to believe that the nonzero dynamic can explain the totality of biological and cultural evolution. Wright's nonzero dynamic is a universal problem-solver that purports to explain everything and thus explains too much. The skeptic in us shies away from such universal problem-solvers.

Even so, an incredulous stare is not an argument. What specifically is wrong with Wright's nonzero dynamic? In a recent debate at Baylor University between Wright and professional skeptic Michael Shermer, Shermer tried to run through some examples from biological and cultural evolution where the nonzero dynamic failed. The problem is that the nonzero dynamic is incredibly plastic.

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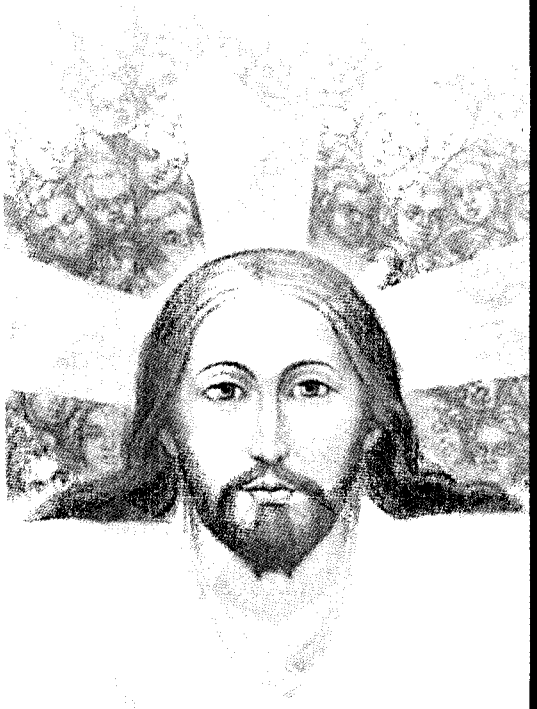

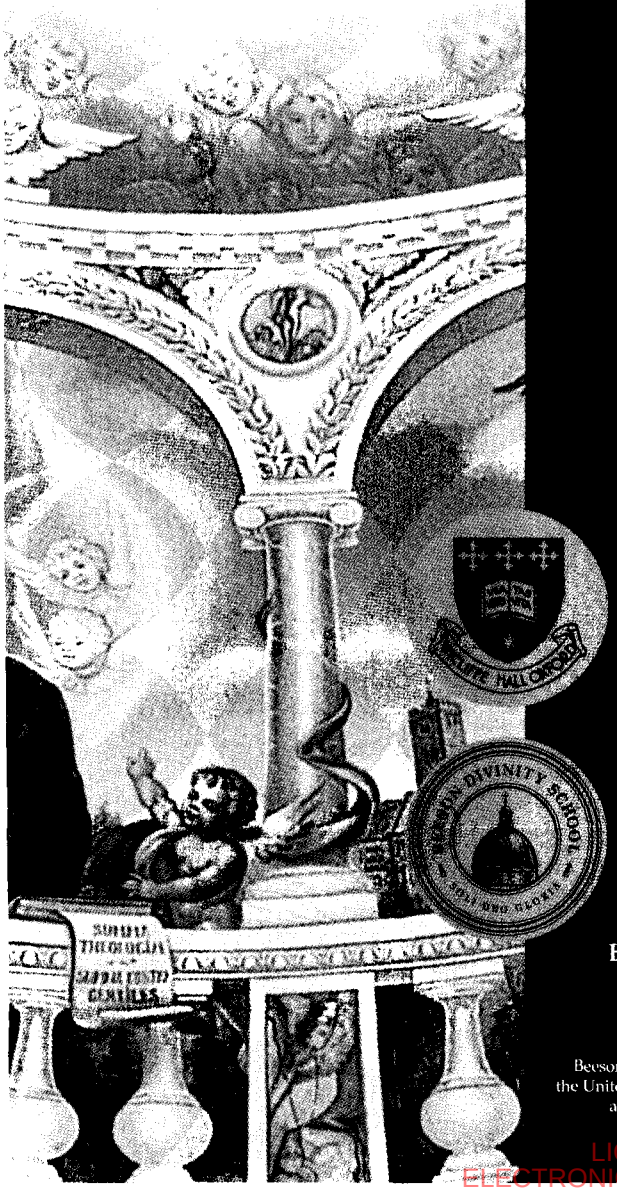

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Indeed, by being fundamentally probabilistic, it is able to accommodate apparent exceptions by dismissing them as failed experiments that do nothing to undermine the ultimate success of non-zero-sumness.

Although there is a flaw in the nonzero dynamic, it can't be shown through historical counterexamples. The subtitle of Wright's book is, after all, "The Logic of Human Destiny," and it is here that the weakness in his argument appears—though perhaps the problem is not so much logical error as oversight. Wright is on to something with his nonzero dynamic, but it is not the complete explanation of natural and historical development he takes it to be. Wright argues that the nonzero dynamic is sufficient to account for biological and cultural innovation. I would argue that it forms a necessary backdrop for biological and cultural innovation, but that besides Darwinian natural selection and game theory a tertium quid is required—namely, intelligence.

The indispensability of this tertium quid becomes evident when we compare Wright's treatment of cultural evolution to his treatment of biological evolution. Although the nonzero dynamic is supposed to assimilate both to a common framework, Wright's treatment of the two is actually quite different. Over and over we read that a non-zero-sum situation leads to some cultural innovation because it was a "good idea." But good ideas only come from idea-makers, namely, intelligent agents. Nonzero dynamics set the stage for innovations to occur, but they are not sufficient. A telephone may be a good idea given a certain stage in cultural evolution, but it still takes an Alexander Graham Bell to invent it. This is obvious for cultural changes, but Wright overlooks the fact that biological innovations also require intelligent agents to actualize the conditions made possible by the nonzero dynamic. A bacterial flagellum may be a good idea for propelling bacteria through watery environments, but who or what is the designer of such bi-directional outboard rotary motors?

Wright would have us believe that any addition of intelligent agency to his nonzero dynamic is superfluous. For Wright, natural selection is an incredibly creative force that produced the very human intellects that in turn guide cultural evolution. The "good ideas" needed to make biological and cultural evolution work are, for Wright, ultimately explained by natural selection. If natural selection is not the creative force that he makes out, though, then Wright's argument is in trouble. He assumes without argument the strongest claims on behalf of Darwinism and from there develops his nonzero dynamic. But the capacity of the Darwinian mechanism to generate complex, information-rich biological structures is increasingly coming under fire, and not just from members of the burgeoning intelligent design movement. Complex self-organization, as developed by the Santa Fe Institute, a scientific think tank, is also challenging the completeness of Darwinian natural selection as a mechanism for generating biological innovation. Complex systems, according to the Santa Fe paradigm, can emerge from purely physical properties of an underlying physical substrate—e.g., hexagonal frost patterns emerge spontaneously by water condensing on a cold window pane.

To sum up, this is an intelligent and well-written book that should be read by anyone interested in whether history has a direction. It is an ambitious book, and somewhat predictably tries to do too much, assimilating the grand sweep of his-

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tory to an ultimately inadequate framework. In particular, by placing inordinate weight on natural selection, Wright fails to address adequately the challenge posed by intelligent agency. Indeed, it is becoming increasingly implausible that all the good ideas in history ultimately derive from natural selection—non-zero-sumness notwithstanding.

Israel and the Nations

Church and Israel After Christendom: The Politics of Election. By Scott Bader-Saye. *Westview. 191 pp. $55.*

Reviewed by **David B. Hart**

Among recent Christian attempts at a theology of the election of Israel, Scott Bader-Saye's book must be accounted one of the better efforts; indeed, where it specifically addresses the theology of election, one of the best. In seeking to frame an account of God's everlasting covenant with Israel that avoids all the familiar paths of supersessionism (the teaching that the Church has simply supplanted Israel as God's chosen people), while also preserving intact the Christian understanding of what has been revealed in Christ, Bader-Saye proves himself an able biblical exegete. Moreover, he makes a strong case for a particular style of Christian politics, one firmly at odds with the tradition of "Christian realism" and with every species of accommodation. All this said, though, it is questionable whether the various parts of his argument quite hang together.

Christian thought is confronted today by two enormous historical facts, Bader-Saye argues: the collapse of Christendom and the Holocaust. In the aftermath of these events it is incumbent upon theology both to consider anew what sort of politics the Church should embody and to recognize how grossly the tradition of Christian supersessionism distorts the biblical doctrine of election, according to which Israel and the Church belong to one covenant whose terms encompass every area of human existence, including the political. Happily, Bader-Saye believes, each of these tasks illuminates the other.

David B. Hart *is Assistant Professor of Theology at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota.*

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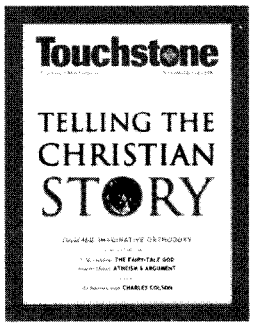

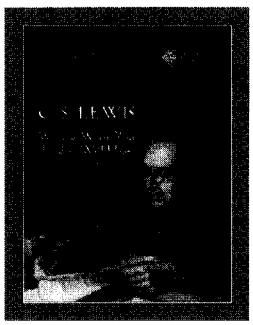

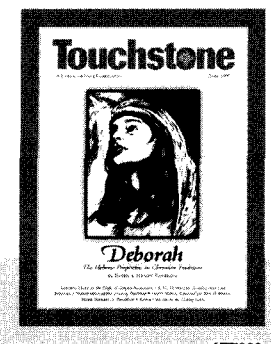

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He begins by distancing himself from theologians like John Milbank and Stanley Hauerwas who tend to speak of the Church in terms of the polis. It is rather Israel, as constituted by the Abrahamic covenant, that alone provides theology with the proper model for its politics, and it is only the continuing particularity of Israel as the true people of the promise that provides the Church with the unique reality of its political vocation. As Bader-Saye properly notes, Milbank's metaphysics leaves small room for the permanent uniqueness of Israel or the historical particularity of election, and Hauerwas is occasionally given to asking the question of Christian practice in terms still too abstract and Kantian in form ("What should *I* do?").

BADER-SAYE draws instead upon the work of Jewish theologians—principally David Novak and Michael Wyschogrod—who have attempted to recall Jewish thought to the centrality of the doctrine of Israel's election, and to a recognition that it is God's election of the Jews (and not the reverse) that constitutes Israel's identity and salvific presence in the world. From Novak he takes the lesson that, insofar as Israel is established first by God's promise, and only long thereafter possesses a land, its election can be "on behalf of" and "a blessing of" the nations rather than a judgment simply passed against them. God's love of Israel will have its final consummation in a day when the restored Jerusalem will embrace all flesh; Israel's election has as its end the peace of all creation. From Wyschogrod he learns the importance of the "carnality" of election: that the covenant that saves (and that redounds to the redemption of the world) is with the very flesh of Israel.

Christian thought forgot these things. As the age of the apostles passed, the predominantly gentile Church began to think of its incorporation into Christ not as God's gracious marriage of the nations to the saving flesh of Israel, but as the displacement of one covenant by another. In the West, election slowly ceased to be imagined in terms of God shaping for Himself a particular people with a particular vocation, and came to be mistaken for a doctrine concerning the eternal predestination of souls. It was this forgetfulness of Israel's irrevocable "carnal election" that—so Bader-Saye claims—opened up a sociopolitical vacuum, ultimately to be filled by "Constantinianism" and by various myths of national

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"election" that have long estranged the Church from its true calling. Had Christians remembered all along that only Israel is the elect nation of God, so the argument goes, and its election the concrete earnest of cosmic peace, they would not have yielded their political soul to the prudential violence of the powers, or mistaken national destinies for some part of the economy of salvation.

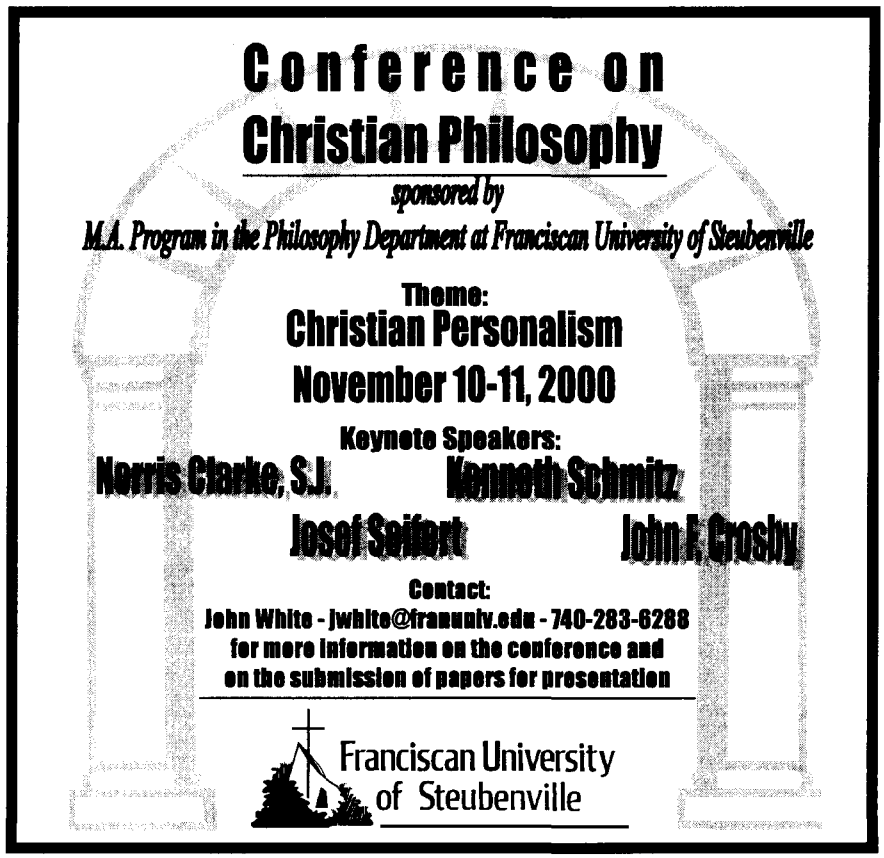
The best part of this book is the chapter entitled "Trinitarian Election." Here Bader-Saye unfolds a reading of the New Testament commendable for its lucidity and insight (his exegesis of Ephesians is especially acute), one that demonstrates both the eternality of God's covenant with Israel and the dependency of the Church upon it. It would have been for the best had this chapter expanded to fill most of the book; it is the richest and most unassailable moment within Bader-Saye's argument. But it is nearly defeated by its brevity: it is too synoptic quite to encompass its theme.

What follows is the political manifesto. When Christians remember that their "nation" is established by Israel's covenant, they learn to live as aliens in the earth. As the election of Israel is a gracious gift whose end is the messianic dispensation of God's *shalom*, Christians are bidden to forge a politics not of the restraint of violence by violence, but of peace. In the saving grace of election, the Church discovers that true freedom is not boundless arbitrary choice but liberation from sin, and so learns to reject the voluntarism and consumerism of the day in order to pursue the work of the Kingdom. In the Eucharist, whereby Christians are joined to the flesh of Christ, and through Him to the "carnal" covenant of Israel, Christians are given their "place," which is not a space to be defended but a gift to be shared.

Moreover, since Christians believe (as Jews do not) that the final reign of God has in some sense proleptically arrived, the Church must already live according to the unbounded messianic peace of the final age. Indeed, in that Judaism may legitimately ask of Christians where the redemption of which they speak is to be found, the Church is bound by its fidelity to the Abrahamic covenant to display in its practices the presence of the Kingdom within history.

This is all wholesome and, depending on the reader's dispositions, largely convincing. But at the end of Bader-Saye's argument it remains unclear what work his account of Israel's election performs within his political theology. If, after all, Christians are called to embody a messianic peace that, according to Jewish thought, has yet to appear within history except as promise, does it really matter whether one's account of the covenant is supersessionist or not? As ever, it would seem, the challenge to Christian thought is to avoid confusing any secular order with God's Kingdom, which means to keep faith with the gospel. What element of Israel's covenant, as an abiding and concrete social reality, would fortify the Church in this resolve? Surely the politics Bader-Saye espouses does not so much emulate Judaism as presume, in some sense, to await it. Hence the procrustean character of his book.

Part of the difficulty is that Bader-Saye begins his argument with an historical fiction. In employing the term "Constantinian Christianity," he allows himself a common but lamentable oversimplification of history, and implicitly attributes to the patristic age a pervasive confusion—between the ends of the empire and the ends of God's Kingdom—of which, in fact, few theologians were culpable. To suggest, moreover, that a keener sense of Israel's enduring elec-



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tion would have spared the Church the "sociopolitical vacuum" that led to the "Constantinian" accommodation is historical nonsense.

Quite apart from the fact that there was never any particular moment when the Church simply capitulated to the empire, and putting aside the immense good of the conversion of Europe, the Church of the empire was neither enabled by supersessionism nor could it have been forestalled by a more robust theology of election. Was there any aspect of Israel's own understanding of election that would have made the conversion of a military empire *ethically* unthinkable? Was not the Church, prior to Constantine's conversion, already quite powerfully aware that it was a separate nation among the heathen, "another nation within the nation," as Origen phrased it, conscious of its own social dimensions, confirmed in its particularity through sacrament and martyrdom? And had not Paul forbidden gentile Christians any resort to the actual political constitution—the Law—of Israel? Of course, the ethos of Christianity was often betrayed by the enfranchised Church, but this was because it had forgotten not so much the nature of the covenant as the finality of Easter.

Where Bader-Saye cannot be gainsaid is in his claim that a proper biblical appreciation of the everlasting uniqueness of Israel's covenant serves to expose as damnably false the misappropriation of the language of election by many a modern nation-state (including, frequently, our own). But beyond this, his text does not constitute a unity; it merely adumbrates an argument yet to be made in greater depth.

Critic of Modernity

THE NEW MAP OF THE WORLD : THE POETIC PHILOSOPHY OF GIAMBATTISTA VICO. By GIUSEPPE MAZZOTTA. *Princeton University Press. 286 pp. $49.50.*

***Reviewed by* Robert Miner**

MODERNITY HAS ATTRACTED its fair share of critics. Recent specimens would include Alasdair MacIntyre, Leo Strauss, Eric Voegelin, and George Grant—writers who have offered penetrating if not mutually compatible critiques of modernity. In their wake the time seems ripe to develop not yet another criticism, but rather a robust and substantive alternative to the dominant version of modernity. In his new book on the Italian philosopher Giambattista Vico (1668-1744), Giuseppe Mazzotta takes a step in this direction as he attempts to unfold "Vico's counter-discourse to modernity."

This counter-discourse, because "counter-," requires its own critique of the ruling modern thinkers, especially René Descartes. Vico is commonly considered to be the founder of the philosophy of history, and it is in the name of history that he launches his polemic against the ahistorical or even antihistorical ideas of Descartes. Writing in the generation after the great Frenchman, Vico denies Descartes' assertion that the self is outside of time, able to know its own existence and essence even if unable to know for certain anything else. Instead Vico proposes that, in the words of Mazzotta, there is a "history of the self and there is a history of the mind in that both steadily experience alterations and shifts." Vico defended this view of the self in his *Autobiography* (1728), and, in his greatest work, *Principles of the New Science Concerning the Common Nature of Nations* (1725), he argued for the parallel historicity of the entire human race. In arguing against Cartesian reason in the name of temporality, Vico anticipates ideas that are often taken to be distinctively postmodern. Mazzotta attributes to him the idea of an "archaeology of the self and of history." Authors like MacIntyre have urged the desirability of using genealogical and deconstructive devices as weapons to demolish the

ROBERT MINER *is Assistant Professor of Philosophy at Boston College.*

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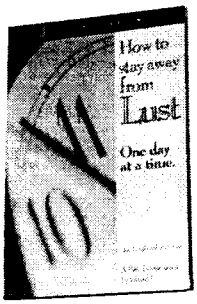

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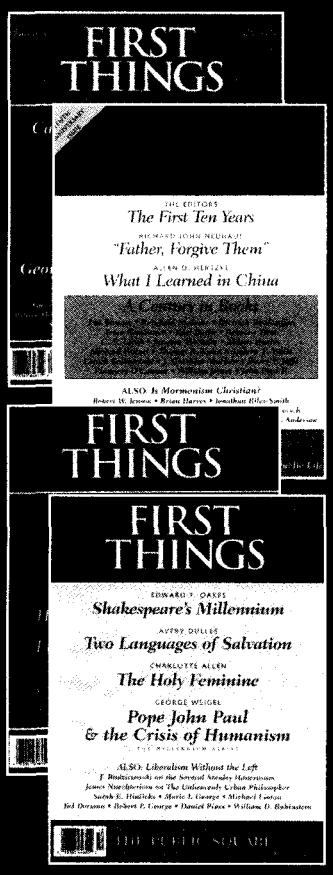

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modern Enlightenment. Mazzotta's analysis shows that this is a much older strategy than our contemporaries believe.

As one might expect from someone with a primarily literary training (the author is a top Dante scholar and professor of Italian at Yale), Mazzotta focuses less on Vico's explicit argument against the *cogito* and more on important contrasts of form and style, e.g., the fact that Descartes writes his autobiographical fable in the first person, whereas Vico adopts the third person in writing his life. Mazzotta's formulations make Vico sound decidedly ahead of his time: "For Vico there is no a priori essence for the self: one is what one makes of oneself, and one makes of oneself what one knows, so that being, knowledge, and making are ceaselessly interwoven in an endless recirculation."

Vico's conception of the tight relationship between knowing and making is captured in his basic axiom *verum et factum convertuntur*, "the true and the made are interchangeable." Mazzotta does not attempt any straightforward exposition of this principle and its various applications. Somewhat like Vico himself, Mazzotta prefers to circle around a conceptual nucleus rather than employ a more linear approach to the text. This approach has its disadvantages, especially for the beginner who wants to understand Vico, but the insights that emerge from what Mazzotta explains as the "mobile curves" of his "baroque style" are valuable. As a "visionary realist," Vico is able to transpose a Christian poetics into "a politics of the sublime or into a politics of wonder," whereas "Descartes, in his optimistic scientism, wants us to wonder at nothing."

Focusing on epistemology and philosophy of history, Benedetto Croce thought that Vico was an essentially "apolitical" thinker, but Mazzotta sides with the recent consensus that politics was a central preoccupation of Vico, and he usefully compares him to Machiavelli and Hobbes. Like Machiavelli, Vico wants to take his starting point from a "realistic" conception of how men are, though he names Tacitus rather than Machiavelli as his model. He "thoroughly subscribes to the trenchant critique of political utopianism" found in the *Prince*, in Mazzotta's view, and "agrees with Machiavelli that politics is a seraglio of boundless passions and a theatre of crude power games." With Lucretius and Hobbes, Vico acknowledges the centrality of fear in the domain of politics. With Francis Bacon and Hobbes, he proclaims grand encyclopedic ambitions, aiming in his jurisprudential writings and in the *New Science* for "an all-embracing synthesis or harmonization of possible contradictions and divisions." It is plausible to see Vico as combining tradition, encyclopedia, and genealogy, thereby uniting what MacIntyre divides in the subtitle of his *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry*.

Vico differs from Machiavelli and Hobbes, however—first by forthrightly rejecting their "Epicurean" interpretation of the role of fear in politics. Where Machiavelli and Hobbes believed that the ruler governs a people afraid of each other and of him, Vico saw a more transcendent object of fear. As a "founding moral-political experience" (in Mazzotta's words), fear is rooted "in the awareness of a lightning bolt that forces archaic man, desirous for self-preservation, to seek shelter in the recesses of the cave, acknowledge his limitations, and submit to the awesome, mysterious powers of the divinity." Fear restrains humans from their original bestial liberty and prompts them to acknowledge divine authority. Vico's use of the concept of fear, Mazzotta concludes, "bends the vocabulary of philosophy in a theological direction."

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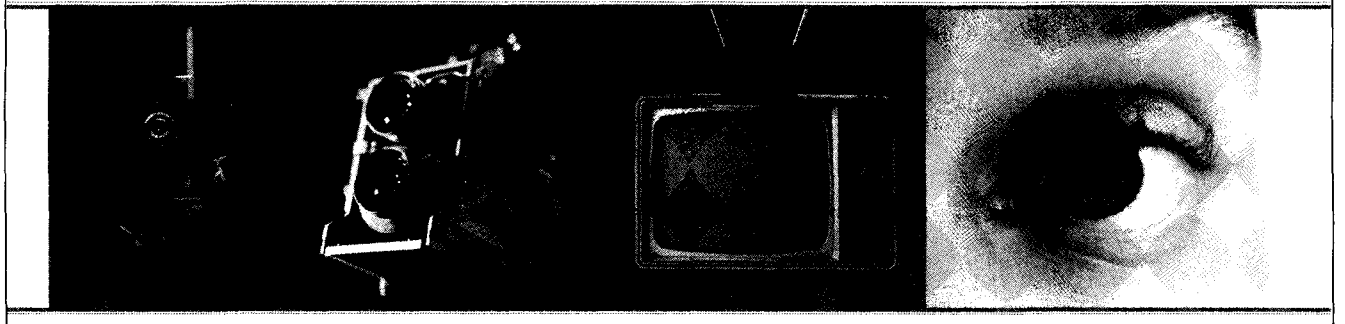
Vico also breaks from modern attempts to reduce justice to a utilitarian set of values and argues for a Platonic conception of justice, sovereign and transcendent. Rigorous attention to the "is," Vico tries to show, reveals the emergence of the "ought." The development of moral norms partly involves the rise of the weak against the strong, as with Nietzsche—well before the German immoralist, Vico noticed the original identity of "strong" and "good"—but this is understood as the operation of divine Providence rather than *ressentiment*. Providence is the key to Vico's synthesis of Plato and Tacitus or, one might say with equal validity, Augustine and Machiavelli.

In this "rational civil theology of divine providence," as Vico terms it, both conceptual analysis and empirical history are brought to bear. Although Mazzotta focuses principally upon the *New Science*, he briefly mentions the earlier (and in some ways clearer) *Universal Law*. In this text, Vico explains the details of the historical development of law (both civil and natural) by arguing 1) that law originates from the divine and 2) that human beings and the virtues and rights arising out of their fallen condition are best understood as modifications of the trinitarian *nosse, velle, posse* (knowledge, will, power). Although Vico suppresses the explicitly trinitarian dimension of his argument in the *New Science*, he does not abandon it, as a reading of the two texts in tandem would show. Mazzotta follows the majority of interpreters in giving short shrift to the *Universal Law*. But in acknowledging the text and resisting the temptation to ironize about it, he sets himself apart from the general run of Vico interpreters.

It is difficult to separate Vico's negative critique of modernity from his positive discourse. Although Vico wrote a *Scienza nuova in forma negativa* (the text is now lost), he suppressed it on the ground that a positive alternative would be of greater value. Mazzotta rightly observes that although the *New Science* can be read as a "chapter in critical philosophy," Vico's thought is more than that. The bulk of Mazzotta's book attempts to expound the *New Science* with a view toward showing its ability to enlarge our understanding of the interrelations between aspects of culture—poetry, myth, law, religion, history, economics, physics—that are too often regarded as essentially disjoint-



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ed rather than as parts of an organic whole.

The explorations of Vico's texts in relation to Homer, hermeticism, and the rhetorical tradition are dense and subtle, and do not lend themselves to easy summary. Mazzotta proclaims his interpretative principle in the introduction: "Poetry, as the language of the imagination, is not a lie." Building on the work of John Milbank, Mazzotta suggests that Vico's "poetic passionalism," despite its Romantic aura, is more akin to an Aristotelian or Thomistic notion of art as a virtue of the practical intellect in the order of making. Mazzotta understands the principle that truth is making not as radically modern, as David Lachterman would have it, but as an insight about the link between truth and art common to Aquinas and Dante. Poetry (from the Greek *poiesis* for "making") is not antithetical to philosophy. It is a crucial part of the quest for wisdom that provides "reason's defense from itself, from the technological and ratiocinative excesses that stifle the life and freedom of the imagination."

Although he dwells on profound continuities with the tradition, Mazzotta recognizes something genuinely "modern" about Vico. Part of Vico's modernity consists in his deep attachment to the encyclopedic ideal. But Vico also was able to see the limitations of the encyclopedic approach. In the final and perhaps boldest chapter of the book, Mazzotta considers Vico's approach to the Bible. Against Croce, who thought that Vico's decision not to include Scripture within the subject matter of the new science was a way of devaluing orthodox Judaism and Christianity, Mazzotta contends that Vico deploys the distinction between the Jews and the gentiles as a support for his conviction that pagan culture engages in an "idolatrous literalization of the nexus between God and nature (or their false pantheistic unity)."

Vico simultaneously marginalizes the particulars of sacred history and incorporates its assumptions about transcendence within the norms of the new science. He does this, according to Mazzotta, because he "envisions a political order in which Christians are the vital 'remnants' both inside and outside of history." In construing the Bible as a "text that demands and causes a scandalous separation between Jews and gentiles . . . among the Jews themselves, among Jews and Christians, and, a fortiori, among Christians," Vico subtly but decisively ruptures his apparently seamless encyclopedia.

Informed by the erudition of a first-rate Renaissance scholar, *The New Map of the World* contains much that stimulates and provokes. The book is written at too high a level to be the ideal introduction to Vico. Yet its appeal need not be limited to Vico scholars. Mazzotta's persistent engagement with questions about modernity and its relation to antiquity and the Middle Ages will prove instructive for students of the history of ideas, and perhaps have the salutary effect of inspiring more philosophers and theologians to read Vico himself.

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Negotiating in Good Faith?

NEGOTIATING IDENTITY: CATHOLIC HIGHER EDUCATION SINCE 1960. By ALICE GALLIN. *University of Notre Dame Press. 282 pp. $32.*

***Reviewed by* Ishmael Law**

URSULINE SISTER ALICE GALLIN is Father Theodore Hesburgh's contemporary in the world of Catholic higher education. After twenty-five years as a faculty member, administrator, and trustee of the College of New Rochelle, she went to the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities in 1975 and soon became its executive director. On retirement in 1992 (except for board memberships and consultan-

ISHMAEL LAW *writes on Catholic theology and education.*

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7:30 P.M. — Vespers

8:00 P.M. — Robert W. Jenson
What Is a Post-Christian?

Monday, September 18

10:00 A.M. — Morning Prayer

10:30 A.M. — David L. Schindler
Evangelizing the Culture of Abstraction: Christology and the "New" Integrity of Nature

12:00 M. — Lunch Break

1:30 P.M. — Philip W. Turner
The Powerlessness of Talking Heads: Ethics and the Re-Evangelization of a Postmodern World

3:00 P.M. — Coffee Break

3:30 P.M. — Anthony Ugolnik
Hearts No Longer Restless: Reawakening Faith in America

5:00 P.M. — Closing Prayer

Presenters

MICHAEL J. BAXTER, C.S.C., Assistant Professor, Department of Theology, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, Indiana

CARL E. BRAATEN, Executive Director, Center for Catholic and Evangelical Theology; Co-editor of *Pro Ecclesia*

ROBERT W. JENSON, Senior Scholar for Research, Center of Theological Inquiry, Princeton, New Jersey; Co-editor of *Pro Ecclesia*

TODD E. JOHNSON, Assistant Professor, Institute of Pastoral Studies, Loyola University

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DAVID L. SCHINDLER, Professor of Fundamental Theology, John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family; Editor of *Communio, International Catholic Review*

PHILIP W. TURNER, former Dean of Berkeley Divinity School at Yale University

ANTHONY UGOLNIK, Professor of Ethics and Humanities, Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pennsylvania

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Power, Pleasure, and Poverty

Monday, September 25

8:30 A.M. — Morning Prayer

9:00 A.M. — R. R. Reno
The Moral Challenges of Evangelization

10:30 A.M. — Coffee Break

11:00 A.M. — Michael J. Baxter, C.S.C.
The Politics of Holy Indifference: Advice to Christians during an Election Year of a Post-Christian Nation

12:30 P.M. — Lunch Break

2:00 P.M. — Todd E. Johnson
Truth Decay: Rethinking Evangelism in the New Century

3:30 P.M. — Coffee Break

4:00 P.M. — Carl E. Braaten
The Future of the Apostolic Imperative: At the Crossroads of World Evangelization

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cies) she began researching this book, and managed to publish in the meantime *American Catholic Higher Education: Essential Documents, 1967-1990* (1992) and *Independence and a New Partnership in Catholic Higher Education* (1996).

There is no one better placed to retell the story of Catholic educators' latter-day attempt to stand with one foot in the Church and the other in the secular culture, and no one more steadfast in her belief that the boat has never drifted too far from the dock. What she presents is not a simple memoir; she has painstakingly searched a variety of archives to give many voices a hearing.

The title provides her master metaphor: Catholic higher education, especially since the 1960s, has been negotiating its identity with a number of new and mutually adverse constituencies—the secular culture, the educational establishment, the American Association of University Professors, the judiciary, the philanthropic foundations, the student market, the donors, the professoriat, the academic disciplines, and, reluctantly, the Church. What the thus far two-hundred-plus Catholic-presenting colleges and universities have mostly refused to notice is that these diverse competitors for their allegiance pull in diverse directions, and in their attempt to oblige them all, the educators did not negotiate their identity. They bargained it away.

GALLIN CAPABLY EVOKES that strenuous yet promising period of the Catholic schools, the late fifties and early sixties. She reminds us of the familiar names that supplied the wherewithal by which Catholics crossed the threshold into the Big Time. There were the great foundations—Ford, Rockefeller, Carnegie, Lilly, Danforth, Pew, Mellon; the generous new founts of governmental funding—GI Bill, NDEA, HEFA, BEOG, SEOG, SSIG, NSF, Fulbright, Bundy, Pell; the educational establishment in the city-state at One Dupont Circle—ACE, AAC, AAHE, NAICU, CIC, AAU, AGB, CGS, CASE, AAUP, AAAS; the faces and initiatives that put such a better face on the culturally parvenu Catholics—Pope John XXIII, Vatican II, Kennedy, Bea, Shuster, Murray, Hesburgh, Gannon, Küng, Novak; and the reassuring advocates of Catholic respectability—Riesman, Marty, Greeley, Kerr, Hassenger.

One day Catholics found the nerve to emulate the best and the brightest models of higher education, were delighted to find a welcoming

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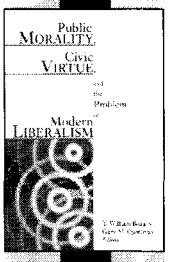

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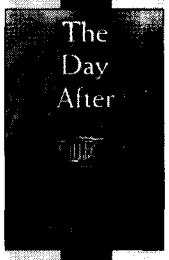

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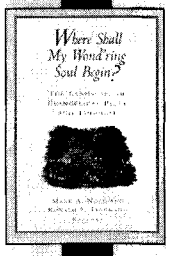

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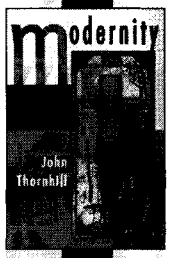

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patronage where previously they had been only patronized, and were abruptly offered competitive access to the resources that would finally make excellence possible. It was almost too good to be true (and it wasn't, really). Then in the mid-sixties, at the very time academic ambition and academic excellence were incestuously mating on Catholic premises, came the first stroke of doom. A series of lawsuits challenged confessional institutions for being too "sectarian" to qualify for federal funds . . . just when it had become unimaginable to exist without those new dollars.

Gallin leads us through that fearful, fateful decade from the mid-sixties to the mid-seventies, when Catholic educators pleadingly assured American Academe that their faith might have been just a sentimental memory, a topic of history, a conventional courtesy, a tightly sequestered idiosyncrasy, a financially useful constituency, a legitimate object of detached curiosity—but never, *never*, an acknowledged resource of intellectual perspective, or inspired imagination, or critical judgment. Faith was not really the community or the culture of Catholic education, not even a component; it was only a peripheral. And what the educators were swearing was true began to become so, even if it had not been so when they first started saying it.

Doom took the form of a legal challenge to governmental funding of new facilities at four Maryland colleges: *Horace Mann League v. Board of Public Works of Maryland.* The case was filed in the Maryland Courts in 1963, adjudicated in 1966, and finally decided after various appeals in 1976. Judgment was given against the two Catholic colleges involved, whereat their lawyers strenuously counseled Catholic educational officials across the nation to eliminate all "sectarian" features of their institutions that might compromise their secularity.

In the years to follow, U.S. higher education underwent a terrifying financial crisis. The Catholic educators were the most terrified. As Gallin's narrative makes plain (despite her disappointing failure to see its lessons), the direct threat of insolvency paralyzed any inclination to sustain the Catholic character of their higher education. The energy to disqualify faith was coming now from Catholics themselves, not from their cultured despisers.

Henceforth Catholics were not to be suspiciously numerous on their own campuses. They were not to be

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dominant (and not, for God's sake, brazenly recruited) among trustees, administrators, faculty, or student body. No academic course, service of worship, or student activity with a discernibly Catholic sentiment could be required of anyone. No policy or undertaking based on Catholic idiosyncrasy could be enacted or enforced, lest the federal subsidies be misused.

Now this was not quite what the Supreme Court had said to the Catholic educators, but with so much finance at risk, this was what their lawyers regarded as a prudently protective over-response. It coincided closely with an energetic conviction then growing amidst many educated American Catholics that assimilation was not just politic but providential. So the Catholic clients could be wantonly docile to their lawyers' admonitions, since the new accommodations to secular practice were felt to be a timely and respectable upgrade.

Apart from some deplorably shrill Cassandras (Gallin not among them), few Catholics protested. This was because they could not have imagined what a denaturing change this was going to inflict on the campuses that had so recently become estimable. They assumed (wrongly) that the old place would stay pretty much the same demographically because, after all, only people drawn by a sense of sympathy and solidarity with the Catholic faith would want to come to a Catholic campus to teach or to study. They could not anticipate how readily religiously indifferent or even hostile academics would, as Deep Throat would later put it, "follow the money."

THE BOOK RECOUNTS a fascinating early hint of what was underway. For Catholics, the sixties were a time when John XXIII's *Pacem in Terris*, the Council's Decree on Ecumenism, Hans Küng's *The Council, Reform, and Reunion*, and the gracious sharing of appreciation and pulpits (and, in some places, communion) brought Catholics into wonderfully warmer relations with their "separated brethren." But at the same time a little-noticed St. Louis survey ominously suggested another sort of outcome. During the sixties, while the number of graduates from Catholic high schools who went to college increased by 33 percent, the number going to Catholic colleges decreased by 43 percent. A national Jesuit poll reported an abrupt 10 percent drop in Catholics in their student bodies. Gallin's study pauses at this point to notice with historian Philip Gleason "a significant movement in the direction of secular norms of excellence and away from the older belief that Catholic higher education should embody and make available to its students a distinctive Catholic educational vision." But his insight is not one she pursues.

During the sixties and seventies, when American college enrollment increased fourfold, the increase at Catholic colleges was sevenfold. Much of the increase was not in the intellectual disciplines but in vocational training, another change that debilitated the capacity of the institutions to be dynamic communities of intellectual inquiry and conviction. Even less were they likely to develop convictions that might be alternatives to the ruling American and academic orthodoxies.

At this point the book turns to another narrative, one in which the author has been even more intimately involved. Just as the Catholic educators were making their peace with academic and civic imperatives, their Church moved in on them from another quarter, with the unspoken inference that the U.S. Catholic body scholastic was short of breath . . . or Breath. "By 1975,"

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Gallin recalls, Catholic educators "were fairly certain that their eligibility for federal funds would be upheld by the courts." But now they were being challenged by the Vatican: How, after a surrender of yet unknown extent to the civil and academic authorities, could universities and colleges advertising themselves as Catholic consistently refuse to allow the Catholic Church similarly to set her standards of faithful performance?

As Gallin tells this story in which she has been an important and partisan character, the keynote of the annoying Vatican intervention has been neither candor nor cunning, but a relentless persistence. The Curia people are repeatedly stiff-armed, but they repeatedly return to the issue. The fellows in Rome aren't all that bright, but they never seem to give in or go away. University presidents continued to name Gallin as one of their negotiators even during her retirement, so her account of Rome-as-Panmunjom is not simply archival. She recounts how the presidents kept playing the winning cards of Academic Freedom and Autonomy, and could not understand why they failed to trump. They argued for Openness, Humanity, Dynamic Change, Renewal, Scholarship, Excellence—all the academic absolutes. The Vatican people smiled, but kept saying that they needed to verify whether it was a *Catholic* Openness, or Humanity, or Whatever.

If the American campuses really were Catholic, as ardently claimed, then surely they had to be openly answerable like every other entity in the world claiming the same fidelity . . . to the Catholic Church. The presidents insisted Rome would just have to trust their efforts. But by this time the folks in Rome were treating the American word like the Russian ruble, and insisted they needed to take a closer look and judge for themselves. The Americans talked dialogue as an improvement on confrontation; the fellows drawn from many nations to Rome, while loath to be confrontational, have been obdurate, perhaps because they remember times when that See's service to the Church (and the world) has had to fall back upon obduracy as fidelity's last resort.

The Gallin account makes clear her enduring loyalty to the hold-out presidents, but she acknowledges "that the danger to the identifiable Catholic character of most of the colleges was and is not imaginary. Although the presidents have reacted strongly against any proposal for a clear juridical relationship with the hierarchy, they have not been able to articulate with precision the characteristics of their institutions which they regard as giving [them their] Catholic identity." By this time the reader may be drawn to believe that it is not precision but candor that is lacking.

Gallin takes up George Marsden's home truth: "In seeking diversity of faculty and students in every institution of higher learning, have we overooked the need for a diversity among institutions? If homogeneity takes over, then how can a community hand on its distinctive character?" But then she falls to speaking again of "a core" of educators committed to the Catholic mission, and one realizes she simply does not get it. This is not a task for a core of the confused. It requires legions of the committed.

Nowhere in this earnest chronicle does the author allow herself to consider that those into whose careless hands a waning but prosperous Catholic ministry, built up with such great pluck for so many years, has been entrusted, and who have insisted with ardor that Rome should underwrite whatever they do as the best that Catholics could hope for, are like your lovable, ex-con brother-in-law who keeps wanting you to co-sign the loan for his Jaguar.

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The God He Barely Knew

ABRAHAM LINCOLN: REDEEMER PRESIDENT. By ALLEN C. GUELZO. *Eerdmans. 516 pp. $29.*

Reviewed by **George McKenna**

WHEN ABRAHAM LINCOLN entered a nearly empty Richmond, Virginia, on April 4, 1865, black dock workers crowded around him, hailing him as a messiah. Shocked, Lincoln said, "Don't kneel to me. That is not right. You must kneel to God only, and thank Him."

Despite Lincoln's injunction, generations of Americans have come close to treating him as a messiah—perhaps understandably, in a country where Christian themes have been so resonant. Here was a man who liberated people from bondage, a humble man who nevertheless implied that he was an agent of Providence, a man who carried the nation through an apocalyptic crisis and was murdered on Good Friday. His death, a Baptist minister in Connecticut declared, was "the aftertype of the tragedy which was accomplished on the first Good Friday, more than eighteen centuries ago." Lincoln became Walt Whitman's Redeemer President, a epithet not seriously challenged, at least in the North, until recent times.

Modern historians and biographers have indeed challenged it, some of them almost with a vengeance. Richard Hofstadter declared Lincoln to be "thoroughly and completely the politician" and quoted the observation of William H. Herndon, Lincoln's law partner in Illinois, that "his ambition was a little engine that knew no rest." In the hands of Hofstadter and others, the Redeemer President had become a shrewd opportunist (albeit, Hofstadter conceded, a "responsible" opportunist), his eye constantly on the main chance.

ONE OF THE chief merits of historian Allen C. Guelzo's new biography is that it leaves room for both reverent and irreverent views of Lincoln. This is a full-scale intellectual biography, one that follows the course of Lincoln's political career but also takes him seriously as a thinker. It is written with clarity and economy, probing the roots of his political and religious thought without becoming tedious.

The subtitle, "Redeemer President," is a bit ironic if we take "Redeemer" in the New Testament sense. Lincoln seems not to have believed in Christ or—at least until his final years—in any personal God. Guelzo quotes one of Lincoln's former companions as saying that in his early years Lincoln was "enthusiastic in his infidelity," and even wrote a tract debunking orthodox Christianity (which his friends, fearing its impact on his career, persuaded him to destroy). He was, it appears, something of a Deist. But his Deism was different from that of Jefferson and other Enlightenment figures, because it was entangled in the remnants of his boyhood Calvinism. Lincoln, who was almost entirely self-taught, aspired to be a rationalist and a humanist, but he could never shake off his upbringing as a "hard-shell" predestinarian Baptist. Guelzo thinks that heritage laid the foundations for his melancholy "fatalism," his sense that history was moved by an inexorable force that used human self-interest to accomplish ends beyond human understanding or control. Lincoln's God was not a redeemer but an inscrutable judge.

Guelzo leaves open the possibility that in the crucible of war Lincoln's skepticism softened, permitting him to develop a more personal relationship with God. After the battle of Antietam, Lincoln startled his cabinet with the announcement that he would issue an Emancipation Proclamation because he had made a promise to himself "and to my Maker" that he would do so if the Union forces prevailed. Still, as Guelzo makes clear, the timing of the Proclamation was also politically convenient, since now it could not be seen as an act of desperation.

Indeed, throughout the book Guelzo often notes that Lincoln's apparently sincere religious convictions also seemed to fit his political agenda. He claims, for example, that the Second Inaugural's invocation of a God whose purposes sometimes confound human understanding was also a rebuke to Radical Republicans and others "so full of themselves as to think both

GEORGE MCKENNA *is Professor of Political Science at City College of New York and author of* The Drama of Democracy.

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the questions and answers obvious." Lincoln used religion against his political adversaries "with the consummate skill of a theologian."

Guelzo never reaches a final conclusion about whether the mature Lincoln ever became a believing Christian. His best guess is that he wanted very much to become one. After noting Lincoln's plan to visit the Holy Land after leaving office, Guelzo adds that such visits had become "a small industry" not only for believers "but also for doubters tortured by their doubts and hoping that the reality of the holy places might somehow become an anchor by which they could arrest their drift from faith." Needless to say, he thinks Lincoln belonged in the latter group.

IF LINCOLN'S THOUGHTS on religion never reached closure, his political commitments were firm and full-hearted. For most of his adult life he was a devoted Whig. Though the Whig Party was scorned for decades after its demise as an organization without principle (a charge first made by former "conscience Whigs" disgusted with its compromises over slavery), its principles were actually well defined. It was the party of "internal improvements," a term with a double meaning: the Whigs championed economic improvements (roads, tunnels, canals, rail lines, manufacturing enterprises), but also causes such as temperance, public education, prison reform, and rehabilitating the poor that related to the "internal" regions of the soul.

In some respects Whigs were like modern-day liberals, except that their emphasis was not on "compassion" but on self-discipline and self-control. The purpose of public schooling, said Whig educator Horace Mann, was not just to impart knowledge or skills but to teach children to control their "appetites and passions." Even the Whigs' failure to take sides on the slavery question was an expression of the Whig principle of national unity. Envisaging America not as a compact of states but as an organic union of people, a cultural unity, the Whigs were horrified by the sectional split over slavery, and tried by every means to bridge it. In the end, of course, they failed, but their quasi-religious devotion to the Union became a staple of Lincoln's rhetoric.

Lincoln was such a zealous Whig that in 1840 the Democrats called him the Whigs' "travelling missionary." Not until 1856, when the party was already falling apart, did he leave

RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS, EDITOR

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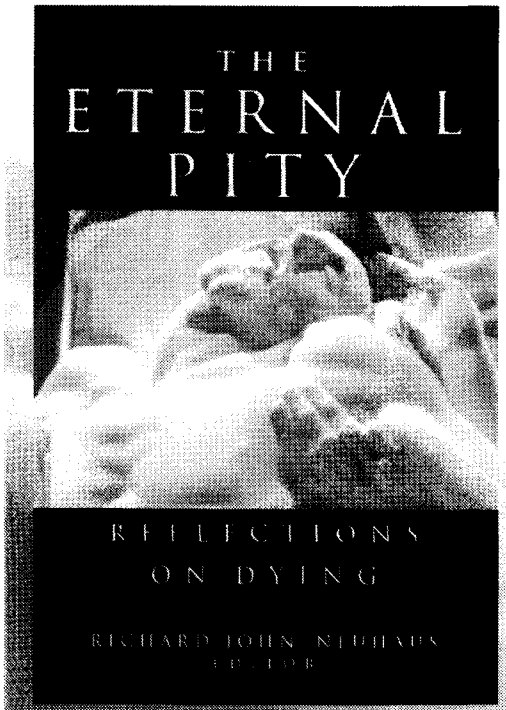

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it for the new Republican Party, and even then his political principles scarcely changed. Guelzo notes that Lincoln's aversion to slavery, which long predated his first public pronouncements against it, expressed both his "cultural Whiggism and his Whiggish economics." Lincoln observed that slavery tempted people to vice and indolence (contrary to the Whig culture of self-control) and fostered pride in the ownership of slaves, thus "swallowing up," as Lincoln put it, "every other mercenary passion." Good mercenary passion was the passion for self-improvement. What slavery did to its immediate victims was less relevant than what it did to the aspirations and mobility of whites. (Indeed, Guelzo notes that in his early career Lincoln applied the term "slave" to Northern subsistence farmers, such as his stepbrother, who inherited the miserable Lincoln farm.) Only in the 1850s, when Lincoln began to see blacks as people "with the same Whiggish aspirations" as his own, was he able to find common cause with them. It was not compassion for black "victims," but Lincoln's perception of what used to be called the "manhood" of blacks, that finally won for him the praise of Frederick Douglass as "emphatically the black man's President."

LINCOLN'S WHIG philosophy sat comfortably with his rather fuzzy religious beliefs. Whigs never sharply distinguished between public and private enterprises. Whatever enterprise contributed to their goals of economic modernization and moral elevation could be a candidate for government sponsorship; that included religion, which they considered as a vital support for public morality. The Whig Party, which has been called "the ghost of Puritanism," was home to fervent Protestant evangelicals, but even secular Whigs encouraged the public expression of religion. That was Lincoln's view, which he repeatedly demonstrated by a variety of measures, from expanding chaplaincy services to reviving the Puritan practice of designating special days for "public humiliation, prayer, and thanksgiving." It is to Lincoln that we owe our modern-day Thanksgiving, and the fact that it is celebrated by Americans of every religion and no religion also bears traces of Lincoln's attitude. Owing, perhaps, to his own theological skepticism, he steered clear of sectarian squabbles, refused to countenance nativist anti-Catholicism, and changed "Christian" to "religious" in the chaplaincy program to accommodate Jewish chaplains.

In Lincoln's mind, public religion and nationalism were bound up together. From his "Young Man's Lyceum Address" in 1838 (to which Guelzo gives surprisingly short shrift) to his presidential speeches, Lincoln made clear that he wanted national unity "under God" and reverence for law as "the political religion of the nation." Whatever else this mix of sanctity and politics produced, for generations after his death it had the effect of uniting a diverse people in the belief that they were all, somehow, participating in a great eschatological drama.

The drama may have run its course. Today there are people, both religious and secular, who conclude that the Lincolnian marriage of religion and politics has not been good for either partner. But what would happen to a country like ours if they were divorced, if American nationalism were emptied of all religious content? We don't know, and Guelzo does not hazard any guesses, though he does leave the impression that Lincoln himself would have been uncomfortable playing the role of Redeemer President. "Don't kneel to me," Lincoln said. There is no kneeling in this book, but it does increase our respect for a President whose public invocations of a God he barely knew helped Americans find meaning in a hideous fratricidal war.

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ALL THINGS CENSORED. By MUMIA ABU-JAMAL. Edited by Noelle Hanrahan, with a Foreword by Alice Walker. Includes audio compact disc. *Seven Stories. 303 pp. $29.95.*

In one of those moments that remind us that there's a culture war going on, National Public Radio decided in 1994 to hire Mumia Abu-Jamal—serving time for the 1982 murder of Philadelphia police officer Daniel Faulkner—as a political commentator on its program *All Things Considered.* Protests from the

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Fraternal Order of Police and threats by then-Senator Bob Dole to cut NPR's federal funding convinced the network to change its plans. For Mumia's supporters on the unrepentant left worldwide—and they are legion—this confirmed what they had been saying all along: Mumia (he is always referred to by his first name) was framed by racist police determined to silence his "revolutionary" message. Mumia's third book, *All Things Censored,* is a collection of his essays, including the unaired NPR commentaries, and thus gives the non-cognoscenti a chance to see what passes for revolution these days. (Accompanying the book is a CD that features Mumia reading some of the essays aloud, along with comments by Cornel West, Martin Sheen, the late Allen Ginsberg, Sister Helen Prejean, Howard Zinn, and others.) Mumia's writing, it turns out, is entirely conventional, the boilerplate of the anti-American left. Most of the essays discuss police brutality, the malfeasance of prison guards and officials (if what he says about them is true, it's scandalous, but I have my doubts), and the death penalty. There are tirades against the drug war (the "war on Black people"), Christopher Columbus, NAFTA, welfare reform, and, in a nice touch, the evils of beef and cigarettes. The U.S. government, he says, imports and sells crack to make addicts of poor blacks, for whom the Constitution "is possessed of all the power and relevance of toilet paper." Throughout, the point is always the same—America is a land of treachery, racial and class prejudice, and unremitting oppression. What Mumia does not discuss here—what he has never discussed—is the treachery that occurred on that terrible night in 1982, when eyewitnesses say he emptied his gun into the body of Officer Daniel Faulkner. It's an omission that makes this book seem obscene.

— *Cristopher Rapp*

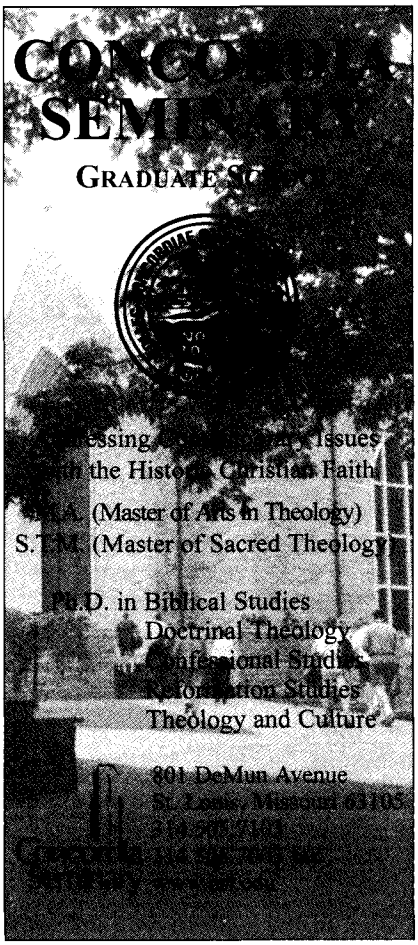
Papal Sin: Structures of Deceit. By Garry Wills. *Doubleday. 326 pp. $25.*

The author laments the fact that Catholics "have fallen out of the healthy old habit of reminding each other how sinful popes can be." Wills says that unlike the popes of old, whose overriding sins were greed, venality, and lust for temporal power, the modern popes, beginning with Pius IX, recruit Catholics into "structures of deceit" about Church doctrine and discipline. Early on, in the chapters on contraception, Wills appears to take the familiar "liberal" position that the popes and their apologists are guilty of thwarting authentic development of doctrine and of ignoring the *sensus communis* of the laity. He goes much further, however, condemning the following propositions: that Christ instituted a hierarchical priesthood; that Christ instituted an apostolic succession; that the presider at the Eucharist represents Christ; that the Eucharist is a *corpus verum* distinct from the worshiping community; that the local lay community lacks power to ordain; that Peter was Bishop of Rome; that Christ instituted a sacrament of marriage beyond that of the natural law; that masturbation, homosexual acts, or contraception are objectively disordered; that the human soul is directly infused by God; that the unborn have rights in a "preconversation state" or that abortion wrongfully takes the life of a human person; that the passion and death of Christ had any properly sacrificial component. The argument is at every step self-consuming. Rome is wrong to deny ordination to women, but by the same token it was wrong centuries ago about the nature of priesthood; Rome should have rendered a different judgment in the case of contraception, but there is no authentic apostolic authority to make such a judgment in the first place. Wills' *Syllabus errorum* leaves virtually no room for what used to be the liberal understanding of the development of Catholic doctrine; as Wills surely understands, false doctrines are not said to "develop." Having set out to give a few good whacks to the popes, he has convinced himself that the Roman Catholic Church is, for the most part, a false religion in captivity to a papal Antichrist. Such has been said before, and it has been said with much greater theological clarity and sophistication.

— *Russell Hittinger*

Ordinary Resurrections: Children in the Years of Hope. By Jonathan Kozol. *Crown. 388 pp. $25.*

Jonathan Kozol is celebrated in educator-land for his tear-jerking accounts of how poor kids get cheated by the tightwad public schools and



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the miserable, selfish, capitalist society of the United States. There is no sanctimonious left-wing piety he has not repeatedly written and spoken. In several recent books, a low-income neighborhood of the South Bronx has furnished his material, and in the process he has come to know a number of its residents. In this latest volume, he deploys them as props in a curious personal journey of not-quite-religious awakening. The preadolescent youngsters that he profiles appear as, for the most part, empathic figures who are unabashed about the roles that faith and prayer play in their own lives. Kozol uses them without success in his own search for a secular version of faith, which he never quite finds. He comes across mostly as a lonely and rather strange fellow. An odd testament, this book is partially redeemed by its evocative portraits of some terrific kids.

— Chester E. Finn, Jr.

GREAT CASES IN CONSTITUTIONAL LAW. Edited by ROBERT P. GEORGE. *Princeton University Press. 206 pp. $35 cloth, $12.95 paper.*

In this volume, the distinguished legal philosopher Robert P. George has brought together a group of leading intellectuals and scholars to comment on five critical cases in American constitutional law: *Marbury v. Madison* (with Mark Tushnet and Jeremy Waldron supplying the commentary), *Dred Scott v. Sandford* (Cass Sunstein and James McPherson), *Lochner v. New York* (Hadley Arkes and Donald Drakeman), *Brown v. Board of Education* (Earl Maltz and Walter Murphy), and *Roe v. Wade* (Jean Bethke Elshtain and George Will). Although the book gets off to something of a slow start—the *Marbury* essays are nowhere near as penetrating as Robert Lowry Clinton's "How the Court Became Supreme," which appeared in this journal in January 1999—most of the contributions are of the highest order. The second writer on each case is responding to the presentation of the first, so the issues are clearly developed and disagreements fully engaged. The benefit of this arrangement is particularly evident in the *Lochner* exchange: Arkes brilliantly defends this misunderstood case, but for all the skill of his revisionist argument, he is, as Donald Drakeman convincingly contends, unable to distinguish the interpretive approach of *Lochner*—using the due process clause to invalidate a statute because of disagreement with its substance—from *Roe*, which Arkes has rejected elsewhere. Maltz's critique of *Brown* is a masterly essay on originalism that endorses the result in the case but properly rejects the reasoning as unmoored in the original understanding of the Fourteenth Amendment. Murphy's reply provides perceptive criticism of the limitations of originalism but fails to set forth any other method of interpretation that would prevent judicial oligarchy. Finally, the Elshtain and Will contributions on *Roe* are rigorous and eloquent in their assessment of the jurisprudential, political, and moral catastrophe that this case represents. This book is a sound effort to provide historical context for our reflection on the use and especially the abuse of judicial power.

— Gregory J. Sullivan

COVENANTAL RIGHTS: A STUDY IN JEWISH POLITICAL THEORY. By DAVID NOVAK. *Princeton University Press. 240 pp. $29.95.*

The title is obviously intended to pique curiosity, since covenant and rights are usually thought to be in tension, if not in conflict. But Rabbi David Novak of the University of Toronto, a frequent contributor to these pages, makes a convincing argument that the mutual dependence of rights and duties can best be conceived in terms of covenantal fidelity. While this is a study in "Jewish political theory," it is by no means of interest only to Jewish thinkers. Novak tackles head-on the conventional antithesis between "communitarian" and "liberal" theories, the first typically posited against "rights talk" and the second against the claims of community and covenant. It is an argument of many parts, one of the more interesting being the claims that God has on the covenant community and the claims the community has on God. To speak of our "rights" that God must respect will strike many readers as odd, if not blasphemous. But Novak persuasively suggests that there are three such rights: first, that God hear the cry of our prayer; second, that He tell us how we should live; and, third, that He render judgment

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on our actions, thus making us moral agents of consequence. Throughout, Novak draws on the riches of Hebrew Scripture, Talmud, and rabbinic commentary as he engages political theories propounded by Aristotle, Aquinas, Hobbes, Locke, Kant, and more recent writers such as Tillich and Rawls. Novak's is an impressive brief for the proposition that rights cannot be secured apart from covenant and covenant must take into account the inescapable legitimacy of rights. *Covenantal Rights* is a learned and tightly reasoned argument that should elicit critical responses from Christian and secularist thinkers. This book breaks new ground both in Jewish thought and in larger debates about the philosophical and religious grounding of political theory. Strongly recommended.

Horrendous Evils and the Goodness of God. By Marilyn McCord Adams. *Cornell University Press. 220 pp. $29.95.*

The subject is theodicy: How, in the face of evil, can we vindicate the goodness of God? It is an old question that, of necessity, will not go away until God finally manifests the vindication of His goodness and justice in the eschatological Kingdom. Adams, who teaches at Yale Divinity School, makes a compelling argument at several levels. Along the way, she counters the restricted rationalism of analytic philosophy and the utopianism of sundry liberationist proposals for "fixing" the world. Insistently attentive to horrendous evils in the actual lives of persons, she boldly draws on both philosophical and theological resources (the two, she says, are inseparable) to support her claim that the person experiencing evil can reach the firm and reasonable conclusion that evil has not defeated the goodness of God. It is not always an easy argument to follow, but it is very intelligently presented and well worth the effort.

The Tipping Point: How Little Things Can Make a Big Difference. By Malcolm Gladwell. *Little, Brown. 277 pp. $24.95.*

The author signs up for Behaviorism 101 and is touchingly inspired to think he has stumbled onto the secret of how the world works. He even comes up with "laws" of human behavior, such as the Law of the Few, the Law of Stickiness, and the Law of

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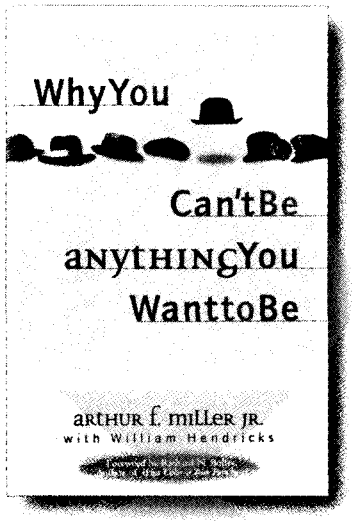

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Context. The discovery is that a very few people can make a big difference, that ideas that stick to the memory have a greater effect than those that don't, and that people are influenced by other people. He intelligently applies such truisms to various marketing and public policy issues, but they are in service to his larger point: forget the formation of character and persuading people about whether something is true—the way to get things done is to condition behavior. One may hope that *The Tipping Point* is not likely to reach the tipping point of influencing many people in their thinking about the human condition.

VIRTUAL WAR: KOSOVO AND BEYOND. By MICHAEL IGNATIEFF. *Metropolitan (Henry Holt). 245 pp. $23.*

Ignatieff, who writes regularly for the *New York Review of Books*, is morally astute and worldly wise. High-tech "virtual war," as in the Gulf War and Kosovo, where nobody gets hurt (at least on our side) is a dangerous delusion, he convincingly argues. It also plays havoc with established rules of national sovereignty and democratic decision making. In addition, the presumed U.S. monopoly on the capacity to wage virtual war is only temporary. This elegantly written book is both informative and sobering.

LITERARY CONVERTS: SPIRITUAL INSPIRATION IN AN AGE OF UNBELIEF. By JOSEPH PEARCE. *Ignatius. 451 pp. $24.95.*

Mr. Pearce, whose biography of Chesterton received major attention in these pages (November 1999), has in this book put to splendid use all the notes he gathered in the course of his prodigious reading in those who, like Chesterton, discovered in Christianity an alternative to a world gone mad. In addition to Chesterton, we find in the present volume incisive sketches of, and generous quotations from, Evelyn Waugh, Siegfried Sassoon, Graham Greene, Ronald Knox, Malcolm Muggeridge, Edith Sitwell, and many others who became Roman Catholic, in addition to C. S. Lewis, T. S. Eliot, Dorothy Sayers, and others who were Anglican. Treating so many characters—almost all of them colorful and more than a few of them eccentric—gives the book a feel of being cobbled together, but the result is a tasty cobbler fit for a king. Of the Catholics, those who lived through the period of the Second Vatican Council were, with few exceptions, unhappy with the changes in a Church that they had counted on not to change. (Some, most notably Waugh, were brilliantly and polemically unhappy.) The *Sunday Times* called the book "an illuminating account of a phenomenon firmly rooted in its period." One may read that, as perhaps it was intended, to mean that the lives recounted here are very much a thing of the past. If so, it is a past of genius, wit, and soaring confidence in a way of thinking and being that exposes the banality of what has become of modernity. For many readers today, one expects, *Literary Converts* will be not only a source of pleasure and instruction but an invitation to faith excitingly pertinent to the present.

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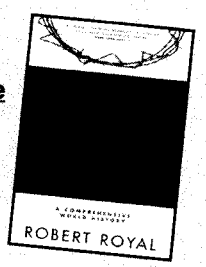

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ROBERT NISBET. By BRAD LOWELL STONE. *ISI. 180 pp. $19.95.*

A worthy contribution to the Intercollegiate Studies Institute's series, "Library of Modern Thinkers." Nisbet, who died in 1996, wrote numerous books, including *The Quest for Community* (his first, in 1953), *Twilight of Authority* (1975), and *History of the Idea of Progress* (1980). Stone correctly recognizes Nisbet as a major figure in the tradition of Burke, although he perhaps underestimates his antipathy to the religious and moral dynamics in contemporary conservatism. Nisbet favored a thoroughly utilitarian and safely domesticated role for religion and morality that stick to their last in cultivating conventional virtues. In his view, religion that

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speaks about ultimate truths in public is a species of the "enthusiasm" that he feared and despised.

FLANNERY O'CONNOR: HERMIT NOVELIST. By RICHARD GIANNONE. *University of Illinois Press. 287 pp. $35.*

A beautifully written piece of literary criticism that mines the depth of the connection between O'Connor's achievement as a novelist and her quest, in imitation of the desert fathers, for aloneness with God. Admirers of Flannery O'Connor should not miss this one.

TERROR IN THE MIND OF GOD. By MARK JUERGENSMEYER. *University of California Press. 331 pp. $27.50.*

The author, a sociologist at the University of California, Santa Barbara, has written extensively on the relationship between violence and the sacred. Noting the public resurgence of religion in world history, the present book examines Muslim, Sikh, and other instances of violence that attend that resurgence. For balance, and somewhat improbably, he includes some fringe instances from "the religious right" in this country. He proposes but does not develop the idea that religion may be the remedy for religious violence.

MAKING: THE PROPER HABIT OF OUR BEING. By MARION MONTGOMERY. *St. Augustine's Press. 341 pp. $37.50.*

Montgomery, a contributor to these pages, offers "essays speculative, reflective, and argumentative" that frequently lift mind and soul to a self-transcending apprehension of the final truth about everything. The book is a rare and rich combination of intellectual intensity, literary grace, and spiritual attentiveness.

BROADCASTING FREEDOM: THE COLD WAR TRIUMPH OF RADIO FREE EUROPE AND RADIO LIBERTY. By ARCH PUDDINGTON. *University of Kentucky Press. 416 pp. $27.50.*

A fine telling of a little known U.S. project that prevented the evil empire from exercising a monopoly on news and opinion. The story involves spies, skullduggery, and Cold War domestic politics, but mostly it is about people who clearly understood the evil of communism and did something about it.

PUBLIC MORALITY, CIVIC VIRTUE, AND THE PROBLEM OF MODERN LIBERALISM. Edited by T. WILLIAM BOXX and GARY M. QUINLIVAN. *Eerdmans. 232 pp. $18 paper.*

With a title like that you just know there will be some overlap with our favorite journal, and, sure enough, here are essays by, among others, Peter Berkowitz, Jean Bethke Elshtain, Daniel J. Mahoney, Wilfred McClay, and Gilbert Meilaender. All very solid stuff, as you would expect, and together they make an attractive package for classroom and for study.

REASON, FREEDOM, AND DEMOCRACY IN ISLAM. Edited by MAHMOUD SADRI and AHMAD SADRI. *Oxford University Press. 236 pp. $50.*

A book of the "essential writings of Abdolkarim Soroush," an influential reformist academic in Iran who is sometimes called, in both praise and criticism, "the Martin Luther of Islam." His proposal is for a future of increasing secularization that does not bring with it a profanation of Islamic culture, with the result that Islam will be seen as not only com-

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patible with but strongly supportive of reason, freedom, and democracy.

The Silence of Sodom: Homosexuality in Modern Catholicism. By Mark D. Jordan. *University of Chicago Press. 248 pp. $25.*

A book that will no doubt find its place in the corner of the academy known as queer studies. When the author is not sniggering over his campy double entendres, he indulges in juvenile rage against religion's alleged oppression of homosexuals. Mr. Jordan came out of the closet at the University of Notre Dame, where he was engaged in sundry and sordid scandals, and now holds an endowed chair in philosophy at Emory University. Ten years ago, even five years ago, one might have said that the only remarkable thing about the book is that it is published by a respected university press. Today, the evolution of the University of Chicago Press deprives it even of that distinction.

Public Voices: Catholics in the American Context. Edited by Steven M. Avella and Elizabeth McKeown. *Orbis. 375 pp. $50.*

A very useful book that brings together Catholic documents addressing issues of public life from the American founding to the present. Of special interest are statements by Bishop John Carroll of Baltimore on Catholic understandings of the American constitutional order, and several documents from the hand of Bishop ("Dagger John") Hughes of New York on sundry questions, including an illuminating exchange with Bishop Patrick Lynch of Charleston on the justice of the Union cause in the Civil War. Family life, just war, contraception, a living wage, organized labor, race relations, and a host of other problems are treated in official episcopal statements or commentary by influential Catholics. Selections in the last part of the book, 1945 to the present, are seriously skewed by the editors' leftist ideology, but, with that caveat in mind, this is a valuable collection that brings to life the ways in which Catholics have tried to cope with the American experiment over more than two hundred years.

Creating Equal: My Fight Against Race Preferences. By Ward Connerly. *Encounter. 273 pp. $24.95.*

Connerly is a feisty black man who has been in the forefront of battling racial preferences and quotas in California and around the nation. He here offers a persuasive practical, as well as unabashedly moral, argument that personal merit and competition are in the short and long term interests of minorities, drawing on his own rise from poverty, which he describes as an escape from "the liberal plantation." This is also as good a place as any to welcome a new contender on the publishing block, Encounter Books. Based in San Francisco, its initial list is impressive indeed.

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THE PUBLIC SQUARE

A Continuing Survey of Religion and Public Life

Richard John Neuhaus

The Church on the Rocks

In the May issue I offered my tribute, written as he was dying, to my former bishop, John Cardinal O'Connor. He was one of the truly great men I have been privileged to know, and I owe him a personal debt of gratitude beyond measure. I will not repeat what I have already said in many other venues. May the trumpets sound on the far side of Jordan, and choirs of angels sing him to his eternal home.

The city did itself proud in honoring him at his death. As did the country, although there was deep ambivalence about President Clinton's appearance at the funeral Mass. It was fitting that the office of the presidency be there, and for the moment the office comes with this office holder, a man whose person and policies clashingly contradict almost everything for which John O'Connor is honored. Then there was the *New York Times*, which, perhaps not surprisingly, was the exception in the otherwise generous treatment by the media. The big story reporting his death was all about power politics and how he was the Vatican's enforcer against enlightened opinion, meaning opinion favored by the *Times*. There was a tribute of sorts by the editors, run at the bottom of the editorial page. O'Connor was depicted as hard-line and orthodox, although it was grudgingly allowed that he was also compassionate to, for instance, victims of AIDS. So there was something good to be said about him. Once again, the *Times* demonstrated that it is not a class act.

"Just once," he remarked to me, "I would like to see a news story that doesn't refer to 'the controversial Cardinal O'Connor.'" He was exaggerating, of course, and said it with a smile. He did not choose controversy; he was chosen to deliver a message that many controverted, and then criticized him for being controversial. This is not without its humorous aspects. A long story in the *Times* on the day before the funeral is titled, "Being Heard in a Church That's Changed: Personal Style a Big Factor in O'Connor's Influence." The substantial continuities in the Church over two millennia notwithstanding, the headline is always that the Church has changed, even when the story is that it has not changed enough. The story speaks of O'Connor's "outsized personality and in-your-face skills with the New York media." In this context, in-your-face means that he calmly persisted in teaching what the Church teaches. And he continued to do so, even in the face of the clearly stated disapproval of the *New York Times*. Clearly, he was, in the view of the *Times*, outsized, as in too big for his britches.

I have told the story before about the dinner I hosted when O'Connor first came to New York in 1984. The purpose was to introduce the media leadership of the city to the new archbishop. At that time, a New York politician and vice presidential candidate was putting it out that Catholic teaching permitted support for the unlimited abortion license decreed by *Roe v. Wade*. As archbishop, O'Connor thought he had a duty to clarify what is and what is not Catholic teaching, and he had the temerity to do so from the pulpit of St. Patrick's. There followed an enormous brouhaha about his "meddling in politics" and "violating the separation of church and state."

At that dinner, a top editor of the *Times* opined that when John F. Kennedy was elected President "most of us thought that the question of whether you Catholics belong here, whether you understand how we do things here, had been settled once and for all." He then added, "But I have to tell you, Archbishop, that in the few months you have been here some of us are beginning to ask those questions again."

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Whether *you* understand how *we* do things here. This was not, mind you, 1884 but 1984. It was not the voice of the WASP establishment reproaching an Irish immigrant upstart, but an editor with recent immigrant roots laying down the rules of admission to the club, and this to the spiritual leader of a community to which 44 percent of New Yorkers claim to belong. What the *Times* lacks in class it makes up for in hubris.

But back to the story about the "changing" Church. "Several church historians said Cardinal O'Connor was perhaps the last cardinal archbishop in American history who could take for granted the prominence of the Catholic Church in the public eye, as a leading institution, a shaper of public opinion, and an overwhelming influence on the culture." This is remarkable to the point of being hard to believe. From being put on notice that it may be expelled by the *Times*, the Catholic Church is now dominating, as the Marxists used to say, the commanding heights of culture. Who would have dreamed that the Church was so powerful? A paragraph later, however, we learn that it is not; in fact it is in steep decline. "The idea that you have authority because you occupy an office is not very functional in the history of the American church," says church historian David O'Brien of Holy Cross in Worcester. Authority, he adds, "has to come from personal charisma or from pastoral care. Much of Cardinal O'Connor's authority came from charisma." That a bishop's authority might have something to do with his being a successor of the apostles is apparently irrelevant to this Catholic historian. The picture presented by the *Times* story is that of an overwhelmingly influential institution that is, at the same time, comatose, but was momentarily revived by the personality of John O'Connor.

This is very confusing. For clarification, the *Times* reporter goes to Paul Baumann of *Commonweal* magazine. He says, "It is impossible for bishops to get the kind of loyalty they had unless there is some sign of change on contraception, mandatory celibacy for priests, and the role of women in the church." But it seems that, at least in large part, O'Connor got the kind of loyalty he had because he upheld the Church's teaching on contraception, celibacy, and the male priesthood. The report compounds the confusion by explaining that liberals believe that "no archbishop is likely to attain real national influence unless he can somehow close the gap between papal doctrine and the spiritual demands of the laity." So O'Connor didn't have real national influence after all, or there is no gap between Church doctrine and the people. Or something.

A Measure of Importance

Of course the story notes that many Catholics do not accept or act according to Church teaching. That is undoubtedly true. For instance, for two thousand years the teaching that we should love one another has met, at best, with a mixed response. Little wonder that the Church is just about finished. R. Scott Appleby of Notre Dame observes to the *Times* that O'Connor's "great accomplishment was to extend the life of that influential presence by his personal style." He was the institution's last gasp, so to speak. One has to wonder why the *Times* spends so much time and energy battling a dying institution. The story continues: "The kind of archbishop most likely to win a national following . . . is one who plays down divisive issues like abortion and eloquently articulates a Catholic position on larger social questions." (For a definition of "larger social questions," see the editorial page of the *Times*.) The reporter rounds up the usual suspects, including Father Thomas Reese, S.J., editor of *America*. His advice to the new archbishop: "Our time calls for dialogue, not confrontation." Right.

The gist of the story is that the Catholic Church is a dominant and threatening institution that is almost dead but was momentarily revived by John O'Connor who earned the admiration and loyalty of millions by following a confrontational course that is alienating just about everybody. This, according to the sustained story line of the *Times*, is precisely the problem with John Paul II as well. In the report at hand, the aforementioned Dr. O'Brien complains, "It is a very papal church now. It looks like the Pope feels he can appoint anyone he wants." Fortunately, Dr. O'Brien is right. The happy result is that, without even consulting Dr. O'Brien or the editors of the *Times*, the Pope has appointed Bishop Edward Michael Egan of Bridgeport, Connecticut.

The new archbishop, I am pleased to say, has been a good friend over the years. Much more important, he is a man of solid orthodoxy and intellectual accomplishment; he is prayerful, personable, thoroughly pastoral, and persuasively articulate. In sum, he is just the kind of bishop whom I would have recommended for New York. If I had been asked. Which, for reasons no doubt having to do with how the Pope views his prerogatives, I was not. Archbishop Egan also has a firm grasp of history, and therefore has no difficulty in recognizing that the complaints of the *Times* and its liberal Catholic choir are pretty much the same complaints pressed a hundred years ago by those who contended that Catholics would never really belong here until the Church gave up its claims to authority and agreed to

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democratize the truth in conformity to those who define how "we" do things here. I expect that when Egan retires as archbishop, sixteen or more years from now, the *Times* will run long stories on how his term was the last hurrah for the dominant, threatening, and dying institution that is the Catholic Church. A possible headline might be, "Being Heard in a Church That's Changed: Personal Style a Big Factor in Egan's Influence." The likes of Appleby, Baumann, O'Brien, and Reese will confidently declare him the last of his kind. As will be said of the archbishop after that, and after that, and after that, until Our Lord returns in glory.

Along the way there will possibly be one or more archbishops who will be prepared to split the difference between truth and falsehood, and thus earn the acclaim of the *Times* and its bien pensant constituency for daring to be uncontroversial. They will still say that the Church is on the rocks, having never heard or never heeded the One who spoke of what He would build "on this rock."

But now my penchant for fairness once again gets the best of me. In the same issue of the *Times* there is another story: "For Countless People, O'Connor Was a Source of Compassion and Strength." This and similar reports carry the testimonials of little people whom the Cardinal helped in sundry ways. Often they are marginal people—pro-life activists, and others who admired his moral and doctrinal stands. They are not *New York Times* people. They are not the people who complain about "the gap between papal doctrine and the spiritual demands of the laity." They are the laity. And not only the Catholic laity, but Jews, Muslims, and people of no specified religion who are grateful for a public figure who kept alive the rumor that there is such a thing as moral truth.

But what do such little people know? I notice that in the *Times* and elsewhere, one evidence of Catholicism's crisis frequently cited is that Hispanics now make up at least one quarter of the Catholic population (it is almost certainly more than that in New York). Imagine a news story asserting that an institution is in trouble because of its growing black membership. It is still polite to say that Hispanics are a problem. There is also the advantage that it gives renewed life to the idea of Catholicism as alien and threatening—i.e., people who do not really belong here, people who do not understand how we do things here.

All this is more cause for bemusement than alarm. On almost every issue of great moral and cultural consequence—abortion, euthanasia, eugenics, parental choice in education, cooperation between church and state, the normative status of marriage and family, the authority of tradition, the arts in service to beauty and the mind in service to truth—the Catholic Church is on one side and the *Times*, along with most of the media, on the other. There are a few individual exceptions at the *Times*, but that is the general picture. It has been that way for decades and will likely be that way for a long time. Now the "controversial" John O'Connor has given way to the soon to be declared "controversial" Edward Egan. Early every morning will be delivered, to a relatively small percentage of the population, the latest instructions on how we do things here. Then the Church and the people will get on with their business. This is not to say that the *Times* is unimportant. There are people, including people of influence, who, in touching docility, accept the daily instruction on how and what to think. It is to say about the *Times*, as my father frequently said (and, I must confess, sometimes said to me), "If you were half as important as you think you are, you would be twice as important as you are."

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THE DEVOTION OF MICHAEL HARRINGTON

Socialism is the religion people get when they lose their religion. Or so it seemed to me when I was a young man on the left, oh, so many years ago. Now the maxim has to be put in the past tense, of course, since there are very few people who still call themselves socialists, although no doubt many are still losing their religion. A few blocks south of where I live, on the Lower East Side (now commonly called the East Village), there are today dozens of little factions called socialist or even Communist with tenement warren headquarters where they grind out pamphlets and hatch plots in anticipation of the revolution. I do not imagine that the FBI or anybody else bothers to keep an eye on them. They are viewed as eccentrics lending color to the neighborhood—a neighborhood from which they will likely soon be evicted by the apparently inexorable course of gentrification.

It was very different in the 1960s when I was deeply immersed in what was then called The Movement, meaning civil rights and the protest against U.S. policy in Vietnam. For many friends and allies then, it was understood that socialism was the goal for which liberalism was the polite word to be used in public. Thirty years later and it is almost the

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case that liberalism is the love that dare not speak its name. In leftist circles back then, my well-known rejection of Marxist thought and contempt for Marxist practice occasioned suspicions about my "political reliability." I was sometimes pressed: "But you *are* a socialist?" The ideologically soft, who really were good liberals, were satisfied with my assurance that I thought there was an awful lot wrong with the world and we should do our best to set things right. That more or less met their definition of socialism. Not so with those who really were socialists.

So much comes back now—so many people, arguments, demonstrations, endless meetings—upon reading Maurice Isserman's new book, *The Other American: The Life of Michael Harrington* (Public Affairs Press). I suppose few readers under forty would know his name today, but Michael Harrington, who died in 1989 at age sixty-one, was once a figure to reckon with in American public life, at least if you were anywhere within the many orbits of the politics of the left. We met on a number of occasions, but I did not know him well. I felt I knew him better than I did because of the many stories told by my colleague Jim Finn, who was very close to Harrington both at the University of Chicago and, later, in the bohemian world that congregated in the back room of the White Horse Tavern in the Greenwich Village of the 1950s.

In the mid-1980s, it may have been 1986, Harrington and I debated at Hunter College here in Manhattan. I had long since defected into the ranks of those called neoconservatives, but Michael was keeping the faith, as it used to be said, and still is said, on the left. I do not recall what he or I said in the debate, but I remember well our long and friendly discussion afterward in which he earnestly explained to me that his moving with his family up to Larchmont in Westchester County did not mean that he had sold out (selling out is the mortal sin in the church of radicalism). "You don't have to be poor to keep faith with the poor," he insisted. He did not have to persuade me of that, and I doubted if it was me he was trying to persuade.

Making History

Harrington's public prominence came with his 1962 book *The Other America*, which played a part, maybe a central part, in sparking Lyndon Johnson's War on Poverty. As Isserman notes, the word socialism never appeared in the book. He contends that Harrington could have become a very major political force had he not been obsessed with manipulating factional fights among sundry socialist sects. In Isserman's account, Harrington was under the powerful influence of Max Shachtman, and the Shachtmanites were the relentless enforcers of socialist orthodoxy as defined by the master. To their credit, Schachtman, Harrington, and others of that company were vigorously anti-Communist, condemning the Soviet Union as "bureaucratic collectivism." Isserman's book is loaded with accounts of ideological infighting among the sects, most of which had a membership of less than a few dozen. Unless he has a special interest in this slice of American history, the reader's eyes glaze over at page upon page studded with acronyms: SDA (Students for Democratic Action), SDF (Social Democratic Federation), SDUSA (Social Democrats, USA), LID (League for Industrial Democracy), SWP (Socialist Workers Party), YPSL (Young People's Socialist League), and on and on. The late James Luther Adams of Harvard used to say that history is made by people who show up at meetings, stay until the end, and then write the minutes. The history of leftist activism is the history of meetings, caucuses, counter-caucuses, walk-outs, expulsions, and more meetings. In SDS (Students for a Democratic Society), this was called "participatory democracy." It had a lot more to do with endurance, deviousness, and dogmatism than with democracy.

So did Michael Harrington waste his life? God only knows. His friend Irving Howe, editor of *Dissent*, memorably wrote, "Socialism is the name of our dream." Harrington gave himself to that dream with religious fervor. When it seemed the dream was a delusion, he fell back on the trope from his early days with Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker movement, contending that the main thing was to "bear witness." In speeches toward the end of his life, as he was dying of cancer, Harrington struck a note of eschatological hope in describing what it means to be a socialist: "What we are dealing with is not simply an economic transition, or a political transition. What we are dealing with is the emergence of a new civilization. What we are dealing with are new ways of life for all the people of the Earth." It was a poignant echo of the eschatology of the Catholic faith that he had abandoned so many years earlier.

Isserman is, all in all, a sympathetic biographer, and the research that went into *The Other American* throws important light on the history of the left in America. He ends on the elegiac note that many had hoped Harrington would pick up the mantle of Eugene Debs and Norman Thomas in leading socialism into a new era. But he notes, regretfully, that that was not to be. "Michael seems to represent the end of the line. . . . An honorable, even heroic, vision, it was also, as Michael reluctantly conceded in the last years of his life, one for which there

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remained precious little room in American political culture."

In fact, as Isserman's account contributes to making indisputably clear, there has always been precious little room in America for a socialist movement defined by Marxist ideology. The high point was eighty years ago, when Debs ran for President in 1920 and received almost a million votes. The socialism to which Michael Harrington gave his life was living off the memory of what might have been, and what, hope against hope, might be again. Nobody outside its immediate circles has much incentive for taking a count, but I would not be entirely surprised if there were on the Lower East Side today as many self-identified socialists as there were when Michael signed up with the cause in the 1950s. A big difference today is that there are not nearly so many sympathizers in high places who are socialists passing as liberals.

The other day on Fourteenth Street I was handed a leaflet issued by, if I remember correctly, NSWOC (New Socialist Workers Organizing Committee). They were getting up a demonstration against the World Trade Organization, or something like that. A few blocks south of here there may at this moment be a young man as bright, personable, and idealistic as the young Michael Harrington making his decision to give his life to the cause. Perhaps he, too, has lost his religion and is looking for another. One must hope that is not the case. One may hope that Isserman is right in suggesting that Michael Harrington was the end of the line. It seems unlikely, however; so powerful is the human need for a dream.

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LORD ACTON, CARDINAL NEWMAN, AND HOW TO BE AHEAD OF YOUR TIME

By the end of the eighteenth century, Christianity in Europe—and therefore, or so many Europeans thought, Christianity in world history—was holding on by its fingertips. To be sure, there was the Wesleyan revival in England, but that was viewed as a matter of tutoring the more base instincts of the great unwashed. Americans could still muster theological enthusiasms, but America was far away, and those Americans with whom the better type of European had contact, men such as Franklin and Jefferson, shared the conviction that the age of faith had given way to the age of reason. And to the age of revolution, most ferociously in France and threatening to overflow everywhere. In the early nineteenth century, it seemed to some that Protestantism in Germany showed signs of catching up with the times, accommodating dogma to reason and biblical tradition to scientific discovery. There Christian thinkers were making the case that the religious sensibility could be harnessed to the best in social and cultural progress. Catholicism, on the other hand, and especially Catholicism that was *Roman* Catholicism, represented everything that was in reaction to the spirit of the times. It was far from the case that everyone joined in the cry of Voltaire, *Écrasez l'infâme*, but more temperate souls thought the superstition would be crushed, and probably should be crushed.

Lord Acton (1834-1902) was and was not a man of his times. A personally devout Catholic, he deplored the fact that the Church seemed determined to set itself against the imperatives of a new age. Today Acton is best known, if he is known at all, for his maxim, written in a letter to a friend, that "power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely." He deserves to be better known, for he is a key figure in the story of Christianity's erratic efforts to come to terms with modernity. He will be better known if a book just out from Yale University Press, *Lord Acton* by Roland Hill (533 pp., $39.95), receives the attention that it deserves. Acton has always had a prominent part in the telling of modern Catholic history, where he is conventionally depicted as a precursor, even a prophet, of the reforms initiated by the Second Vatican Council. Hill, too, follows that convention, although not uncritically. Now that the pontificate of John Paul II has, it is surely safe to say, secured the interpretation of the Council, it is possible to evaluate more fairly the role of Acton in modern Catholic history—especially his vigorous campaign against the 1870 definition of infallibility at the First Vatican Council.

Ahead of Their Time

"Everywhere in the late nineteenth century there was a hardening of the ideological fronts," writes Hill, "of Catholics, Protestants, agnostics, atheists, socialists, conservatives, and so forth. A Catholic scholar like Döllinger (who found good things to say of Luther and who felt that the Pope should not be a temporal ruler) or an English liberal like Acton (who saw through the illiberal partisanship of Continental liberals and nationalists and who sensed the corrupting effects of absolute power in Church or

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state) seemed like traitors to their side, as well as hopelessly out of tune with their age. But, like Newman, they were really in advance of their century." That is the conventional telling, and there is a lot packed into it. It would be too much to say, to the contrary, that Ignaz von Döllinger and John Acton were perfectly in tune with their age, for Acton in particular had a personal piety that he held in unreconciled tension with his and his age's view of scientific reason. But I believe it more accurate to say that, of the three, only John Henry Newman was in advance of his time.

John Acton, writes the distinguished historian Owen Chadwick in his foreword to Hill's biography, "was only half English." Born in Naples and buried in Tegernsee, Bavaria, Acton's most formative education was under Döllinger in Munich. Born into the British aristocracy, he was related by blood or marriage to noble and even royal houses of Europe. Inheriting ample means to indulge his interests, he was very much in the model of the educated European with a mission to enlighten his still benighted age. Having frittered away his fortune, toward the end of his life his purse and status were restored by his appointment as Regius Professor of Modern History at Cambridge, the Protestant establishment's reward for services rendered. Acton was less a trained historian than a talented and assiduous amateur in love with archives, from which he accumulated mountains of notes for books that never got written. Were it not for his part at Vatican Council I, he would be more forgotten than he is. Chadwick writes: "Never neglected [in his time], for he was too famous for that, he has sometimes been regarded as a person who did not give the world what he ought to have achieved, and some have considered it a mistake to spend time in the study of a failure." And yet, says Chadwick, Acton is "one of the most fascinating and complex of all the Victorians," and his thoughts on politics "still repay the attention of anyone who tries to examine that difficult theme, the nature of human freedom."

Acton tirelessly declared his devotion to liberty *in* the Church, and to the liberty *of* the Church. His devotion to the first liberty, however, ended up by setting him against the historical realization of the second liberty. To understand why this happened is to understand something very important about the tradition of liberal Catholicism up to our present time. Roland Hill writes: "Acton's experiences in Germany had shown him, in particular, that whereas Protestants had shared the eighteenth-century decline of religion in equal measure, they were also the first to recover from it. They, rather than Catholics, dominated the German literary revival culminating in the work of Goethe. To Acton this movement, though it had no specific religious impulse, seemed comparable to the revival of the Medicean age. It spread to the German universities, producing a renascence of medieval historical studies borne by the new scientific approach." Religion's recovery, in this view, meant that religion was catching up with the times, and was even making modest contributions to the best in the culture. This was the course chosen by the leaders of the *Kulturprotestantismus* of Germany that Lord Acton admired.

For Acton, "the new scientific approach" in history meant that certainty could be achieved by documentation. "By going on from book to manuscript and from library to archive," he wrote, "we exchange doubt for certainty, and become our own masters. We explore a new Heaven and a new Earth, and at each step forward, the world moves with us." The scientific study of history, in this view, is not unlike revelation. In Acton's judgment, historians such as Macaulay and Carlyle had erred in deferring to the past, or to the station of their subjects, or to the interests of the institutions that claimed their allegiance. When that happens, said Acton, "then History ceases to be a Science, an arbiter of controversy. It serves where it ought to reign; and it serves the worst cause better than the purest."

History and Science must be pure, which means untainted by interest, personal perspective, or, above all, institutional authority. At one point in their friendship, Döllinger took exception to Acton's harsh judgment of a certain historical figure. After a futile exchange on the subject, Döllinger wrote, "We must agree to differ." Acton was having none of it: "Unfortunately it is not a question on which one can agree to differ. Historical science does not tolerate such differences. . . . As long as history cannot attain to such certainties as compels the assent of honest men, it is worthless as an arbiter of controversy and a teacher of nations." The reign of History is absolute. Of those holding Acton's view, Newman wrote, "They seem to me to expect from History more than History can furnish."

Unbridled Infallibility

Acton was not and did not claim to be a theologian. As his personal piety and his quarrels with the actual Church ran on separate tracks, so history and theology went about their separate tasks each undisturbed by the other. Acton's objections to the definition of infallibility were not dogmatic but historical. With slight reference to the actual wording of the carefully circumscribed proposition debated

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and finally adopted by Vatican Council I, Acton fought an imagined proposition that everything said by the pope or officially asserted by the Church would henceforth be deemed infallible. It was said, for instance, that the historical, social, and political judgments of the 1864 *Syllabus of Errors* issued by Pius IX would become infallible if the Council affirmed the dogma. Further, it was feared that infallibility would mean that the authority of the pope would trump the authority of governments with respect to the political obligations of their citizens. This was the argument that William Gladstone, the long-running British Prime Minister, made shortly after the Council, with Acton's encouragement and assistance. There were indeed papal enthusiasts who contended that not only every word but every thought of the pope is infallible. That the Council decisively rejected such enthusiasms did not deter Acton from putting the most ominous construction on infallibility. He was, after all, a combatant in the heat of battle. As he understood it, he was the champion of liberty against the forces of reaction and outdated obscurantism.

During the Council, Acton set up shop in Rome. "He met bishops and diplomats daily. Leading members of the minority dined frequently at his apartment in the Via della Croce. He attended receptions where he might find out what was going on, afterwards noting down carefully what he had heard. He was always on the go, encouraging and organizing the opposition bishops, bridging national and language barriers among Germans, French, Austrians, Italians, English, Americans. He truly merited the title of 'Chief Whip' for the minority. Late at night Acton came home, sitting up till four or five in the morning to write his long letters to Döllinger or Gladstone, to catch the courier in time."

In addition to being the chief whip of the minority, Acton was the Xavier Rynne of Vatican I. As a century later Rynne, whose real name was Francis X. Murphy, wrote long dispatches for the *New Yorker* giving the "inside story" on what was happening at Vatican II, so Acton wrote under a pseudonym ("Quirinus") extensive letters for the *Allgemeine Zeitung* that were carefully read by participants in Vatican I. A major difference, of course, is that Rynne championed the majority while Acton championed the minority.

Both Acton and Rynne thought they were championing the "liberal" side, which is not self-evidently the case. The actual documents of Vatican II—as distinct from the largely imagined "spirit of the Council"—are firmly grounded in the tradition, and, as authoritatively interpreted by subsequent magisterial teaching, the Council bears little resemblance to what today passes as liberal Catholicism. Similarly, Acton's liberalism was blind to the concern for the liberty of the Church, which, one might argue, was the great question for Catholicism in the nineteenth century.

Of Acton and Döllinger, Roland Hill perceptively observes, "Neither of them appeared to have any clear theological concept of Infallibility. They, no less than their opponents, the advocates of Infallibility, were victims of traditional concepts of the divine right applied to the temporal order." It may have been only intuitively understood by most of the bishops at Vatican I, and not understood at all by others, but in retrospect it is clear that infallibility struck a major blow for the liberty of the Church against the claims of temporal powers. What Acton, Döllinger, and even Newman criticized as the "centralizing" of authority in Rome was an assertion of the Church's authority to govern itself, and a declaration of independence from governments that claimed a right to appoint bishops and otherwise intervene according to their own interests.

Defending the Old Order

On this crucial question of the liberty of the Church, Henry Cardinal Manning, the Archbishop of Westminster, was right. Historians today, including Roland Hill, are much more favorable to Manning than were historians of the past. Newman, it will be remembered, opposed Manning, but did not challenge infallibility as a teaching; he thought it "inopportune" for the Council to define it dogmatically. Acton had little but scorn for Newman and other "inopportunists," as they were called, declaring inopportunism to be the name of the party of losers.

Manning, on the other hand, recognized, along with others, that the universality of the Church would, in the hostile environment of that century, become easy prey to the fissiparous forces of nationalism and state power unless it was more firmly attached to the successor of Peter, the Bishop of Rome. Lord Acton, by way of sharpest contrast, energetically lobbied Gladstone and the European powers to intervene in the Vatican Council in order to prevent any strengthening of papal authority. It would probably be too much to credit Manning and the majority with the ability to foresee the development of ecclesiology and its relationship to temporal power that came about with Vatican II and has been further clarified by subsequent pontificates. But they intuitively understood that what was at stake was the liberty of the Church to be the Church. In this perspective, and against the conventional wisdom, Lord Acton, far from being

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ahead of his time, was defending the old order that had subjected the Church to temporal powers.

History presents many occasions for citing Charles Peguy's aphorism that God writes straight with crooked lines. In the nineteenth century's dispute over the embattled papal states, it must be said in retrospect that Acton, Newman, and others were right in believing that the papacy would be better off without them. In that dispute, which was raging before and around Vatican I, Manning, Pius IX, and others mistakenly connected temporal power to papal authority. In fact, the loss of the papal states and the Council's definition of infallibility combined, in ways that nobody at the time could anticipate, to save the universality of the Church by asserting the liberty of the Church. The ways in which God wrote straight with crooked lines in the past is, one is reminded, a salutary caution against excessive certitude as to what God is doing in the present.

Not least of the merits of Roland Hill's biography is the insight it provides into the complexity of the personalities engaged in these conflicts, and the curious ways in which personal allegiances shifted from issue to issue. There was a great gap between Newman and Acton on many scores, not least because Acton was of the "old Catholic" English aristocracy and, like others of his class, resentful not only of "interference" by Rome, but also of the growing number of Irish immigrants who made Catholicism appear vulgar and alien to the English establishment, and of converts such as Newman who stole the intellectual spotlight. The old Catholic families were "Cisalpine" in their sympathies, meaning that they thought the Church should take its directions from "this side of the Alps," and in this respect they had much in common with Gallicanism in France and "Josephenism" elsewhere in Europe. The last refers to the policy of Joseph II, Holy Roman Emperor in the latter part of the eighteenth century, who thought it the duty of the state to regulate religious affairs without reference to Rome. Many of the old Catholic families in England held on to the improbable hope that the "old religion" would be restored, effectively replacing the Church of England as the established church.

Newman's Discontents

Newman, as is well known, also bridled at what he viewed as the heavy hand of Rome in English affairs, especially the fact that the Church was treated as a "mission" under the direction of the office of the Propagation of the Faith. At times he pined nostalgically for the patristic era when bishops and local churches had more flexibility to engage theological and ecclesiastical disputes that only later and when essential to unity were resolved by Rome. On the other hand, Newman in 1845 had converted to the *Roman* Catholic Church, and he knew that it was the Petrine office that guaranteed its universality. After the years of excitements while leading the Anglo-Catholic cause, Newman frequently felt depressed and out of place as a Catholic. He was not part of Acton's aristocratic world of recusant families that had refused to accept the schism of the sixteenth century, nor could he readily identify with the newer Irish immigrants.

In 1860, in a tone not untouched by self-pity, he wrote in his spiritual journal: "I am nobody. I have no friend at Rome. I have laboured in England, to be misrepresented, backbitten, and scorned. . . . O my God, I seem to have wasted these years that I have been a Catholic. What I wrote as a Protestant had far greater power, force, meaning, success, than my Catholic works." And again in 1863: "O how forlorn & dreary has been my course since I have been a Catholic! Here has been the contrast—as a Protestant, I felt my religion dreary, but not my life—but as a Catholic, my life dreary, not my religion." Of course, these were his thoughts before the publication of his *Apologia Pro Vita Sua* and the later *Grammar of Assent*. Especially the former met with sensational success and established Newman as one of the most venerable figures of English life, admired by Catholics and Protestants alike.

Acton turned on Newman with a passion. It was not enough, he insisted, to say that the dogma of infallibility was "inopportune"; it was wrong because it violated Acton's notion of the Science of History. In his private notes, Acton wrote, "Newman came over for the sake of the pope. That was his purpose and reward." Newman thought history insufficient; authority was needed. Acton interpreted Newman's position this way: "Without a supreme authority, skeptics win." At Newman's death, Acton wrote to Gladstone: "You know that in this instance I am forced to use the ambiguous word *great* as I should in speaking of Napoleon or Bismarck, Hegel or Renan. But I should quarrel with every friend I have, in almost every camp or group, if I said all I know, or half of what I think, of that splendid Sophist." He accused Newman of encouraging "a school of Infidelity" and of being among those who are "advocates of deceit and murder." The last charge derives from Acton's confused idea that infallibility means that popes of the past whom he believed were guilty of deceit and murder had, in fact, been infallibly right in what they did. Of Newman and another party with whom he disagreed, Acton wrote that they are "two very able and evil men."

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Acton's judgments were hard. Those who were not with him were against him, and this applied as well to his Whig politics. He wrote, "Politics come nearer religion with me, a party is more like a Church, error more like heresy, prejudice more like sin." Over the years, he worked in closest cooperation with the Protestant Gladstone against Catholics such as Manning and Newman, indeed goading Gladstone on in his anti-Catholic polemics, while all the time believing that his private Catholic piety was safely separated from the interests of the Catholic institution. After the Council, his old teacher Döllinger was excommunicated for refusing to accept its decision, and for a time Döllinger flirted with the breakaway Old Catholic Church in which two of his theological professor friends became bishops. Leo XIII, who succeeded Pius IX, made overtures for Döllinger's reconciliation with the Church, but these met with no success. Unlike Acton, Döllinger knew that his rejection of the authority of the Council had consequences for his ecclesial communion. Acton lived in mortal fear that he would be required to say directly whether he did or did not accept the decision of the Council. If required, he believed he would in conscience have to answer in the negative; the consequence, he expected, would be excommunication and the collapse of his private definition of what it meant to be Catholic.

Although *Lord Acton* does not explore this dimension, it seems more than possible that Acton's falling out with Döllinger was related to the latter's understanding that ecclesial belonging is not a matter of private judgment. The Church determines what she teaches, and the assent required of her members. After the Council, Döllinger was understanding and forgiving toward the bishops who had opposed infallibility but later submitted to the Council's decision. Not so Acton. In his eyes they were cowards and turncoats, even though he desperately hoped that he, unlike the bishops in question, would never be required to give a straight answer. When the break in their friendship was final, Döllinger observed, "No one in the whole world knows me better than Acton and knows more about me. But the difference between us is that I am tolerant towards people while he is an absolutist in judging them and is totally intolerant." The illiberality of liberals is, it seems, not a recent phenomenon.

The Cultural Context

A balanced appreciation of Acton requires an understanding of the degree to which anti-Catholicism was dogmatically entrenched among the social, political, and cultural elites of England. As Hill notes, "In England at the time it was hardly possible for Catholics to rise professionally." The recusant aristocracy was the protector of a besieged minority, maintaining enclaves of educational opportunity in England, typically under Jesuit auspices, for Catholic students, and networks of protection abroad, which explains why Acton was not only by blood but also by education and life experience only "half English." It is within this virulently anti-Catholic context that one can understand the sensation and scandal caused by Newman's conversion, and the sacrifice he made in breaking with the establishment of the Church of England and of Oxford, a sacrifice quite incomparable to that made by a convert in, for instance, America today. In our circumstance of denominational, if not religious, pluralism, becoming a Catholic is commonly viewed as an individual matter of continuing one's "spiritual sojourn." What Newman did was to strike a blow at the very religious, cultural, and political identity of the nation.

The old Catholics of the recusant families had, until the mid-nineteenth century, been seen as part, albeit an anomalous part, of the English scene. Accustomed understandings were disrupted by converts from the Oxford Movement, Irish immigrants fleeing the potato famine, and by Rome's decision to restore the English hierarchy in 1850. All this gave rise to a vigorous "no popery" movement in Protestant England. As Hill writes, "English Catholicism had enjoyed a tradition of lay—aristocratic—supremacy for the centuries following the English Reformation. The old Catholic landed families . . . continued to exert their influence over Catholic life well into the nineteenth century. . . . A triumphant Rome now set about to bring the faithful within the clerical discipline and pietistic practices of the Latin aesthetic," which posed a serious challenge to the Catholic establishment of which Acton was part. The modus vivendi that the Catholic establishment had worked out with the emphatically Protestant national establishment of England was now threatened by what Acton and others called "the Romanization of English Catholicism." Hostility to Roman "centralization" under Pius IX had everything to do with maintaining the position of the Catholic aristocracy in England.

Enemies of Liberty

In goading Gladstone to intervene and encourage other nations to intervene at the Council, Acton resorted to alarmist depictions of what was at stake.

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If the Council has its way, he wrote Gladstone, Catholics would be "bound not only by the will of future popes, but by that of former popes, so far as it has been solemnly declared. They will not be at liberty to reject the deposing power [the power of the pope to depose monarchs and other rulers], or the system of the Inquisition, or any other criminal practice or idea which has been established under penalty of excommunication. They at once become irreconcilable enemies of civil and religious liberty. They will have to profess a false system of morality, and to repudiate literary and scientific sincerity. They will be as dangerous to civilized society in the school as in the state." In sum, Catholics would no longer be capable of being loyal subjects of the crown, which is precisely the charge launched by Gladstone shortly after the Council in a pamphlet that Acton helped to write.

It is not too much to say that Acton, in effect, took the Protestant side in the telling of the English story of liberty in terms of a noble struggle against papal tyranny. Even the very sympathetic Roland Hill acknowledges that English Catholics were "wounded by his cruel way of exposing their historical myths." Acton's view of liberty was inextricably tied to the interests of his own position and power as an intimate and influential advisor of Gladstone and a much favored courtier of Queen Victoria. This puts a somewhat different light on Acton's famous stricture about the corrupting nature of power. To the Anglican historian Mandell Creighton, who suggested that popes and kings should be given the benefit of the doubt, Acton wrote: "If there is any presumption it is the other way, against holders of power, increasing as the power increases. Historic responsibility has to make up for the want of legal responsibility. Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men, even when they exercise influence and not authority: still more when you superadd the tendency of the certainty of corruption by authority."

There is, of course, much truth in what Acton says about power and corruption, but it is far from the whole truth. Hill wisely observes, "Richer as the twentieth century is in its experience of the corrupting effects of absolute power, it has become conscious of the dangers threatening also from the opposite extreme. Men in power tend at least to maintain the semblance of probity, if only to maintain their power. But those who lack power and want it often lack even that restraint." There is an additional factor to be taken into account: "Acton saw himself as a pivotal figure in several areas of Liberal policy development in behind-the-scenes political maneuverings. That Acton relished seeing himself at the center of power is underscored time and again in his letters."

The problems that puzzled Acton, he once told Mary Gladstone, the Prime Minister's daughter, were "not in religion or politics so much as along the wavy line between the two." His personal and institutional loyalties were clearer on the political than on the religious side of that wavy line. Hill writes: "Acton's regard for Gladstone had almost a mystical quality. That makes it difficult to understand for a later generation tempted to gloss over it as sycophantic adulation, which it was not. It was meant for a statesman with whom he felt at one in fundamentals, both religious and moral—for, as he said, for him the Liberal Party had always had the status of a dogma, even a Church."

The ironies and complexities in the development of the liberty of the Church were sometimes better understood by the world's practitioners of Realpolitik. After he was driven into exile following the revolution of 1848, Vienna's absolutist chancellor, Prince Metternich, noted that Piux IX, who came to the papal office as a liberal, was inadvertently undoing his temporal power by encouraging the forces of change. Metternich wrote, "A *liberal* Pope is not a possibility. A Gregory VII could become the master of the world, a Piux IX cannot become that. He can destroy but he cannot build. What the Pope has already destroyed by his liberalism is his own temporal power; what he is unable to destroy is his spiritual power; it is that power which will cancel the harm done by his worthless counselors." The liberty of the Church required a disentanglement from efforts to wield temporal power, and it is that long course of disentanglement that has produced the pontificate of John Paul II and a papacy immeasurably stronger—spiritually, morally, and institutionally—than the papacy of a hundred or two hundred years ago. The First Vatican Council, with its assertion of spiritual authority and of jurisdictional rights against the several states, was key to securing the liberty of the Church. That is what Acton apparently never understood, probably because he was preoccupied not with the liberty of the Church but with his own version of liberty in the Church.

No Place to Stand

Men such as Acton and Döllinger, who understood themselves to be on the cutting edge of progress and enlightenment, might be better described as defenders of the status quo. In Germany, Bismarck's *Kulturkampf* was a program of "modernization," but as Roland Hill notes, his anti-Catholic measures had

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the result of increasing the loyalty of both bishops and the faithful to Rome and the pope. Where else were Catholics to find a place to stand except by the side of Peter? And by the side of a Peter who became stronger precisely as he had no sword to wield other than the sword of the Spirit. In England, Acton offered Catholics no place to stand. Suspicious of the growing number of converts such as Newman, alienated from the Irish immigrants, in rebellion against the hierarchy at home, and waging war against Rome, Acton offered only the possibility of standing by the old aristocratic Catholic elite guided by the infallibility of the Science of History. That was not a very promising prospect for the future of Catholicism in England.

Acton seems to have suspected, at least at times, that he was working against the course of history, and even that that course might be providentially guided. Besieged by the forces determined to deprive him of his temporal power, Pius IX declared himself to be the "prisoner of the Vatican." Acton writes to his wife in a tone of puzzlement, "The Pope's power has grown through the fall of his system." At another point, when it seemed possible Piux IX would be forced to leave Rome, Acton recognized the source of his power: "The Pope, in his eightieth year, at the close of the longest and most unfortunate pontificate on record, going forth once more to eat the bread of exile and to die in a strange land, would afford a spectacle that would rouse the feelings of many millions of men." As the papacy became weaker, it became stronger.

For centuries, the papacy had cultivated partnerships with states in order that they might jointly wield power, the one with the spiritual sword and the other with the temporal. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, one state after another declined to join in that partnership, declaring themselves thoroughly secular and determined either to eliminate or control the influence of the Church. Although Pius IX and, later, Leo XIII did not see it that way at the time, state hostility to the Church was working the liberation of the Church. As states became more relentlessly secular, spiritual authority gravitated toward the Church, and the local churches under such secularizing states adhered ever more firmly to Rome.

God writes straight with crooked lines, and not least of all with the crooked line that was the career of Lord Acton. Much of what Acton wrote—for instance, *The History of Freedom*, recently republished by the Acton Institute in Grand Rapids, Michigan—is still very much worth reading. But when it came to the big picture, Acton got it wrong. It is John Henry Newman, with his much more sophisticated understanding of reason, history, and ecclesial development, who is vindicated by the Second Vatican Council and subsequent pontificates. Lord Acton—for all his energy, influence, and occasional genius—pitted liberty *in* the Church against the liberty *of* the Church, with the result that he defended the subordination of the Church to the cultural and political establishment of his time. In this respect he was more than "half English," being as Erastian as the Archbishop of Canterbury.

As *Lord Acton* makes clear, whatever the author's intention, its subject was not a precursor of the Second Vatican Council but of a now much diminished Catholic liberalism that, in the name of "the spirit of the Council" and in subservience to a cultural establishment, opposes the liberty of the Church to be the Church. It must be said in all fairness that the questions in Acton's day were not seen so clearly as they are in retrospect. One can, albeit with some difficulty, put oneself in Acton's position, where the question seemed to be a simple one of liberty vs. tyranny. As we have seen, Newman was not entirely unsympathetic to that perspective. His "inopportunism" was informed by, inter alia, a worry about the heavy-handedness of Rome. But he understood that there is such a thing as "the mind of the Church" and was able to think with the Church (*sentire cum ecclesia*) while also, like Acton, thinking with the best ideas of his time. Newman's greatness was in the humility of recognizing that his reason and grasp of history were not infallible.

I would not be surprised if today Acton recognizes that Newman chose the wiser course. Indeed, I strongly expect that is the case. As I also expect that Acton rejoices that the Church today, her liberty secured in communion with Rome, is the world's premier champion of the idea of freedom for which he contended. Even if he understood that idea imperfectly, it is probable that, in ways that surpass our understanding, God used also his efforts to bring about a result that was not, and could not have been, anticipated by his Science of History.

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SPEAK UP FOR THE PERSECUTED

Religious persecution and, more specifically, the persecution of Christians seems to be eluding the radar screen of the United States Catholic

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Conference (USCC). That, at least, has been the impression of those who follow these questions in the human rights community. This has become something of an embarrassment, since various evangelical and oldline Protestant denominations, strongly supported by Jewish leaders such as Rabbi David Saperstein and Michael Horowitz of the Hudson Institute, have been pressing this issue in recent years. Last November, more than a hundred thousand local churches participated in the annual "International Day of Prayer for the Persecuted Church," and an even larger participation is expected this year. But, for some reason, the Catholic leadership has been largely silent. Last August, the East African Catholic Bishops Conference appealed to the West to protest the "genocidal conflict" in southern Sudan, but for months there was no public response from the U.S. bishops.

Until recently, Archbishop Theodore McCarrick of Newark served as chairman of the USCC's International Justice and Peace Committee. In many forums, he has urged "quiet diplomacy" rather than public protest. He served as part of a religious delegation to China, an arrangement negotiated by Beijing and the Clinton Administration. The international press and human rights groups sharply criticized the delegation for letting itself be manipulated by the Chinese government. ("U.S. Religious Leaders Tread Softly in China," *Washington Post*, February 19, 1998; "China May Manipulate Clerics," Associated Press, February 21, 1998.) McCarrick also serves on the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, which is an independent panel established by Congress to make recommendations for U.S. policy. The Chinese persecution of Protestants, Tibetan Buddhists, Falun Gong, and Muslims has received close attention by the commission.

To the extent there is a muted Catholic voice on religious persecution, the problem is likely with the USCC, which is inevitably a bureaucracy and, as is the way with bureaucracies, tends to assume a knowing attitude of possessing inside information not available to mere mortals. The USCC, regrettably, has a history of relative silence on the persecution of Christians, whether by the Soviet empire or by the Sandinistas in Nicaragua. Rightly or wrongly—and I expect more rightly than wrongly—Protestants and Jews who have been at the forefront of the fight against religious persecution bridle at what they view as the condescension and indifference of the staff at USCC. In his letter on the Great Jubilee, *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* (The Coming of the Third Millennium), John Paul II called on Christians to remember the martyrs of today, and a special commemoration to that effect was held at the Coliseum in Rome on May 7. As the Pope noted, the first-century martyrs such as Agnes and Stephen are better known than the many thousands of martyrs of our own time, and that urgently needs to be remedied. An important step toward that end would be for the USCC to join in publicly honoring the martyrs and to at last take its place alongside Protestants, Jews, and others in contending for an end to religious persecution around the world. China and Sudan are most particular cases in point.

In view of this unfortunate history, one welcomes the more warmly the recent statement on the Sudan by Bernard Cardinal Law, the new chairman of the USCC's International Policy Committee. After reviewing the sordid facts of Khartoum's killing and enslavement of Christians and others, Cardinal Law declares: "The violence and repression in Sudan cannot, indeed, must not continue. The people of Sudan yearn for a just peace. They cry for an end to the enslavement of their women and children. They yearn to be free from indiscriminate violence and the constant threat of famine. They long for equal rights for Muslims, Christians, and practitioners of traditional African religions. They search for an opportunity to build a just and prosperous society that is a valued member of the family of nations. It is long past time for the international community to overcome its indifference toward the humanitarian nightmare in Sudan. It is long past time to do what can be done to help the people of Sudan realize their yearning for a just peace. Peace is not easy, but it is possible, and it is the only way forward."

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HOW CHRISTIANITY COOPTS ITS CONTRADICTIONS

One problem with secularization theories that tend to view modernity as a juggernaut that keeps religion always on the defensive is that studies frequently contrast what people say they believe with what they actually do. This is an inherent difficulty in discussions of religion, and especially of biblical religion. The normative statements of Christian faith and life, for instance, are so very elevated, while the people who are Christians are so very ordinary. There is typically a glaring gap between what people profess to believe and what they actually do and

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appear to be in their everyday lives. The gap widens when religion is defined chiefly in terms of morality. Few lives can withstand, for instance, a close examination of the claim to love others as we love ourselves. The gap invites charges, at the vulgar level, of hypocrisy, while more sophisticated critics speak of religion as "epiphenomenal" or as "false consciousness." In this way of thinking, the phenomenon—what is really happening—is secularization, with religion being little more than a wan protest against, or self-deceiving denial of, that reality.

Of course, Christianity co-opts the criticism of those who accent the gap by accenting that we are all sinners. That being the case, the gap between what we say and what we do is hardly surprising. As a preacher friend says, "My mission is to get the hypocrites off the streets and into the church where they belong." Thus is the alleged contradiction between professed faith and actual practice turned into a confirmation of what Christians say they believe. Some secularization theories to the contrary, sociology and psychology have little access to what people *really* believe. People beyond numbering gathered at the altar and attending to the Word of God say that this moment defines "the real world." Critics may choose to believe that what these people do elsewhere and at other times is the real world, but that is simply what the critics choose to believe.

There is no way to "scientifically" adjudicate these conflicting claims. Most believers, I expect, intuitively understand them not as conflicting claims but as claims to be held in tension, with the real world of the everyday held accountable to, and somehow mysteriously comprehended by, the real world defined in the moment of proclamation and worship. The essential point to be made about this infinitely complex subject is that those who contend that secularization is the basic reality to which religion is in a position of accommodating itself are, in the final analysis, making a somewhat arbitrary decision. In addition, their explanation comes up against religious explanations that are quite capable of giving an account of the very process of secularization that supposedly discredits religious explanations.

From the Beginning

Those scholars who see religion surviving defensively in "sheltered enclaves" that are surrounded by a disenchanted, desacralized, and essentially hostile modern world have an important point, of course. That is exactly how many Christians view themselves and their communities of faith. In this understanding, America is post-Christian, perhaps even anti-Christian, and the Christian faithful are therefore subcultural or even countercultural. A measure of such tension has been part of Christianity from the beginning.

Put differently, the sense of living in tension with the surrounding world is not dependent upon a particular reading of our historical moment but is inherent in the Christian understanding of reality. Jesus said of his disciples that they are in but not of the world, and in the early Church that is sharpened by statements such as 1 John 2:16: "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh and the lust of the eyes and the pride of life, is not of the Father but is of the world." Much of the monastic tradition—flourishing not in a time of secularization but in a time called "the age of faith"—was intended to accent that tension, as it is also accented by groups such as the Amish and Mennonites who emerged from the "left wing" of the Protestant Reformation.

The tension is not peculiar to such groups; rather, they are simply more sharply emblematic of a core truth about Christianity. Christians are not really at home in the world because they understand themselves to be on the way to the heavenly Jerusalem, or, in the words of the Book of Revelation, "a new heaven and a new earth." Call it a sheltered enclave or call it a pilgrim band on the march, the tension with the surrounding world experienced by the community of the faithful is a permanent feature of Christianity, and has more to do with eschatology (teachings about the final end of history) than with theories of secularization.

In this respect, too, Christianity is formed by Judaism. Languishing in exile, the children of Israel cried out in Psalm 137:

By the waters of Babylon,
there we sat down and wept,
when we remembered Zion.
On the willows there
we hung up our lyres.
For there our captors
required of us songs,
and our tormentors, mirth, saying,
"Sing us one of the songs of Zion!"

How shall we sing the Lord's song
in a foreign land?
If I forget you, O Jerusalem,
let my right hand wither!
Let my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth,
if I do not remember you,
if I do not set Jerusalem above my highest
joy!

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Alien Citizens

This keen, even painful, sense of being in exile, of not being entirely at home in the surrounding world, is evident in the second century "Letter to Diognetus." The anonymous author is responding to pagan curiosity about this curious cult of Christians who "set little store by this world, and even make light of death itself." It is, he says, a marvelous paradox: "Though they are residents at home in their own countries, their behavior there is more like that of transients; they take their full part as citizens, but they also submit to anything and everything as if they were aliens. For them, any foreign country is a homeland, and any homeland is a foreign country."

"Alien citizens." The phrase perfectly captures a necessary dimension of the Christian reality that is too easily confused and trivialized in contemporary discussions of secularization. For alien citizens, sometimes the emphasis is on the "alien" and sometimes on the "citizen." In circumstances of intense anti-Christian persecution, they may understand their existence almost exclusively in terms of being aliens. I say "almost" because even then they still understand this to be their Father's world and the kingdom of his Christ. The persecuting enemy is a usurper and his rule is only for a time. In circumstances where it seems almost everybody is a Christian, and Christianity itself is formally established, Christians may understand their existence almost exclusively in terms of being citizens. That neat fit between Christianity and culture was evident, for instance, in the nineteenth-century Protestant view of moral progress that we considered in the last issue. And yet Christians never belong so securely, they are never so comfortably at home, that they can forget that they belong to a community of pilgrim faith that confesses, in the words of the Letter to the Hebrews, "Here we have no lasting city, but we seek the city which is to come." To put it more accurately, Christians can forget that and often have forgotten it, but when they do so they are neglecting an essential aspect of being Christian in a world that is not yet fully redeemed.

So at times Christians will look like an embattled remnant hunkering down in sheltered enclaves, desperately trying to keep up one another's spirits in the face of the encroaching threat of a hostile world. At other times, they are in martial formation, fully armed and on triumphant march. "Onward, Christian Soldiers!" And a good deal of the time, maybe most of the time, they understand themselves to be in both modes, and simultaneously so. In other words, the secularization theories that were once so dominant played on one of several cross-cutting themes that are permanent features in the way Christianity understands our present circumstance short of the Kingdom of God.

Christians who, for whatever reason, accent the "alien" mode of being Christian in the world tend to reinforce the notion that secularization is on the march, driven by the ideology of secular*ism*, and resulting in a post-Christian America. Yet, as often as not, the very same people can, with remarkable facility, move into the mode of high confidence about winning America and the world for Christ. We ought not to be surprised by this, nor to view the apparent contradiction with scorn. This is not necessarily a contradiction but a reflection of cross-cutting themes that are part and parcel of the Christian teaching that the vindication of the truth is both "now" and "not yet." The theories of secularization that were so dominant over the last half century had less to do with "social science" than with a proclivity to capitalize on one side of Christian self-understanding. In the name of secularization, they compounded the "not yet" that has never been with the never-to-be-again of Matthew Arnold's sea of faith:

> *Its melancholy, long, withdrawing*
> *roar,*
> *Retreating, to the breath*
> *Of the night wind down the vast edges*
> *drear*
> *And naked shingles of the world.*

In this view, the modern world is disenchanted and desacralized. Religion—the source and song of sacred enchantment—is, at best, in a holding action. It is a zero-sum proposition; as modernity advances, religion must retreat. But there is an element of the tautological here; what appear to be two factors are really the same. It is not so much that secularization is the result of modernity as that secularization is insinuated into the definition of modernity, in which case it is obvious that religion and modernity cannot coexist. But in America, in this most modern of societies, religion flourishes. It is said that religion "accommodates" itself to modernity, and accommodation is understood as compromise, as surrender on the installment plan. And it is true that different ways of understanding reality jockey with one another for advantage in a complicated give and take. But accommodation can also be understood as creative adaptation. Under the stress of new circumstances that were once seen as threatening, religion may propose a reenchantment and resacralization of the world, and the sea of faith is again

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at the full, and round
earth's shore
Lay like the folds of a bright girdle
furled.

The protean capacity for adaptation and renewal is the very story of Christianity from its beginnings. This is hardly surprising in a religion that is premised upon the promise that its adherents will be led into an ever fuller understanding of the truth. Jesus said, "When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth; for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak, and he will declare to you the things that are to come" (John 16:13). In the nineteenth century, John Henry Newman refined the notion of "the development of doctrine" that is now officially part of Catholic teaching, but in the very first centuries theologians acted on the same intuition. The early Church Fathers spoke of "the spoils of Egypt." Just as the children of Israel took with them on their journey the riches of Egypt, so, it is said, the Church appropriates the wisdom of Greece and Rome and turns it to the service of the gospel. Similarly, in the thirteenth century when many feared the rediscovered philosophy of Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas, in one of the greatest careers of creative adaptation, recruited "the philosopher" to the illumination of Christian truth. So too, the stark antithesis between religion and science that excited so many in the nineteenth century is increasingly an historical curiosity as Christian thinkers have not only appropriated the insights of science but today are frequently the champions of scientific reason against its postmodernist and anti-foundationalist detractors.

From the beginning of the Christian story, conflicts and battles give way to accommodation, adaptation, and co-optation. The process is often dragged out and disorderly, a matter of fits and starts, of apparent advances and retreats—which is advance and which is retreat becomes evident only over time. Within the Christian community itself, in all its maddening diversity, there are running disputes over what is authentic development and what is illegitimate compromise, over what is unfolding orthodoxy and what is heretically deviant. Short of the Kingdom of God, when we shall, in the words of Paul, "know even as we are known," Christians live with a large measure of "cognitive dissonance." It is the normal state of Christian existence in the "now" and "not yet" of the world as it is. Spirit-guided discernment and testing is the constant task. "Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God; for many false prophets have gone out into the world" (1 John 4:1). It is doubtful that the job of sorting out rival truth claims and prophecies is any more difficult in the twenty-first century than it was in the first. In fact, it is even possible that, having had much more practice than the early Church, Christians are getting better at it.

FT

WHILE WE'RE AT IT

■ In an informative and generally balanced article on Holocaust denial and revisionism, D. D. Guttenplan writes in the *Atlantic Monthly* about the British trial of journalist-historian David Irving, who sued an American scholar for libel. Irving claimed that he lost a book contract and otherwise suffered injury from an orchestrated campaign to discredit him because of his long-standing assertions that the conventional telling of the Holocaust "myth" is greatly exaggerated. Irving lost in court, but Guttenplan recognizes that there is legitimate scholarly dispute about the number of Jews killed and the number of survivors living today, and agrees that much survivor testimony is historically unreliable. Such matters, he says, are legitimate subjects for study by historians. He writes, "And when they are prevented from doing it, either by Jewish groups who feel that the Holocaust belongs to them alone or by Zionists seeking to preserve Israel's 'moral capital,' the result is a blurring of distinctions between memory and propaganda that serves only the interests of the Nazi perpetrators and their political legatees." He ends his long article by recounting a visit with Raul Hilberg, whose monumental 1962 study, *The Destruction of the European Jews*, undergirds much of subsequent Holocaust scholarship. At his house in Vermont, Hilberg says of Irving and other revisionists, "If these people want to speak, let them. I am not for taboos and I am not for repression." What Hilberg is for is facts. Insisting that he is an atheist, Hilberg says, "These numbers do matter . . . call it religious, if you like." Guttenplan concludes that "Hilberg's passion for detail, his police-reporter's faith in getting it down right, stayed with me longer than any of the conflicting sympathies aroused by my inquiries. The sanctity of facts. It isn't much. It may not be enough. But it is all we have." Not the sanctity of life nor the sanctity of the lives but the sanctity of the facts about the numbers. Surely

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whatever sanctity is possessed by the facts and numbers is derived from the sanctity of persons, which is derived from. . . . Ah, but then there is that little matter of atheism.

■ The redoubtable David Blankenhorn of the Institute for American Values does his necessary bit in cursing the darkness, but takes a break to note some encouraging signs: "In Wisconsin, the new state budget provides for a full-time position in the Department of Health and Family Services that will have the responsibility of working with clergy and civic leaders across the state to develop community-wide marriage policies. Pioneered by Mike McManus, the founder and president of Marriage Savers, based in Maryland, these policies bring together local clergy to develop shared standards for marriage preparation and education. When implemented, one main result of the policy is that all engaged couples, as a condition of getting married in a local church or synagogue, participate in a cooperatively developed program of premarital counseling and education. In Florida, the organization Family First recently released a study of state marriage trends, *Marriage Matters: A Social Analysis of the State of the Union.* Family First is one of several state organizations around the country—others include the Michigan Family Forum and the Washington Family Council—that increasingly focus on marriage, including marriage law reform and/or marriage education. In Oklahoma last year, Governor Frank Keating made cutting the state's divorce rate by one-third an explicit goal of his Administration. Keating's speech was the first time that any U.S. governor every formally proposed such an objective. Shortly thereafter in Arkansas, Governor Mike Huckabee sponsored a state conference on the family, focusing especially on marriage. 'It's time to declare a marital emergency in Arkansas,' declared the Governor. He called for cutting the state's divorce rate by half. In New Mexico, a Governor's conference on marriage is currently in the planning stages. In Utah, Governor Michael Leavitt has created a thirteen-member Commission on Marriage to 'recommend and, where possible, help implement ways to promote, strengthen, and increase awareness of the importance of marriage.'" Now I hear some libertarians in the peanut gallery objecting, "Nanny state!" And it is true that there are distinct limits to what government can or should do to discourage vice and encourage virtue. But political leaders do have pulpits, bully or otherwise, from which they can point directions. And, for better and worse, there are numerous government programs that have an impact on what people decide about marriage and family life. Since such programs will likely be with us for the duration, the least we can do is to try to tilt them toward virtue.

■ Condoms, according to the British medical journal *Lancet*, are viewed as "seat belts for sex." A problem revealed in the article's detailed statistical analysis is that seat belts seem to have almost no relation to the incidence of automobile injuries or deaths. As, the same article says, is also the case with condoms and sexually transmitted diseases, including HIV. The authors conclude, "We should ask whether we have the right balance between messages about condom promotion and partner reduction or selection." That, I take it, is academese for self-discipline, abstinence, and maybe even fidelity.

■ "Marxism is humanism to the highest degree," writes Charles C. West, emeritus professor of ethics at Princeton Theological Seminary. Charles West is an honorable man, and during the Cold War demonstrated courage in opposing the compromise of Christianity with Soviet-sponsored "peace" movements. "In its Communist form the vision failed," he acknowledges, but it is obvious that, for him, the Marxist vision lives on. Writing in the *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, West, who was himself a missionary in China before Mao's triumph, describes at length the failures of Marxism "in its Communist form" (in the real world it had no other) without mentioning the estimated 150 million people it killed. He concludes, "What is the form of a just, equal, and caring society that could take the place of Marxism? What is the vision of common humanity that can transcend the savage tribal wars that now divide us? No such vision is out there today." Really? For a vision of authentic humanism that provides a coherent, comprehensive, and compelling picture of a possible human future, he might read George Weigel's biography of John Paul II, *Witness to Hope.* John Paul is among those who recognize that Marxism, in both theory and practice, radically dehumanized the human project. It is a great sadness that a learned, honorable, and devoutly Christian thinker such as Charles West should so miss it.

■ The *New Republic* calls it "a new argument on abortion." It's not exactly new, but neither is it uninteresting, especially in view of its source. The author of the article, Gregg Easterbrook, makes his position clear: "Women are right to fear that political factions are working to efface their rights. Late-term

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abortion is simply not the ground on which to stage the defense—because, unless the mother's life is at stake, late-term abortion is wrong." Brain activity at the point of *Roe v. Wade*'s "third-trimester" approximates what is ordinarily meant by consciousness, according to the medical authorities consulted by Easterbrook, and there is no doubt that in being aborted "the fetus will feel the pain of death and may even, in some sense, be aware that it is being killed." In a decent society, he says, trade-offs are recognized as necessary and people should be able to reach a compromise. His proposed compromise is this: "It is time to admit what everyone knows and what the new science makes clear: the third-trimester abortion should be very tightly restricted. The hopelessly confusing viability standard should be dropped in favor of a bright line at the start of the third trimester, when complex fetal brain activity begins. Restricting abortion after that point would not undermine the rights granted by *Roe*, because there is no complex brain activity before the third trimester and thus no slippery slope to start down. Scientifically based late-term abortion restrictions would not enter into law poignant but unprovable spiritual assumptions about the spark of life but would simply protect lives whose humanity is now known." Easterbrook also makes much of the fact that science has now discovered that as many as two-thirds of all conceptions (fertilizations) perish by "natural" causes and do not result in a baby. The discovery is hardly new, and would seem to be somewhat beside the point. Abortion is at every point in time aimed at destroying the life that might become what everybody would recognize as a baby. Easterbrook's third-trimester proposal, however, would in some respects be a significant advance. It could save thousands of lives. (Perhaps to appease pro-choicers, Easterbrook seriously underestimates the number of late abortions at present.) It would represent a change of direction away from the culture of death. But of course he is dead wrong about those "poignant but unprovable spiritual assumptions about the spark of life" at the very earliest point of pregnancy. It is an indisputable scientific fact that this life, barring natural catastrophe or intervention to terminate it, will become what is indisputably a human baby. At even one-week old it is what a one-week-old baby looks like. It is what you and I looked like when we were one-week old. It is possible the movement in law and public policy will turn toward something like Easterbrook's proposed compromise. Such a provisional compromise might be welcomed by pro-lifers, so long as it understood that it is not a settlement. A morally and politically satisfactory settlement of the abortion question may never be possible. The only satisfactory settlement is "Every child, born and unborn, protected in law and welcomed in life." That is the goal made imperative by moral reasoning and scientific evidence. Whether it is politically or legally attainable will be determined by the relentless contention for the culture of life in the years to come. In the context of that contention, the *New Republic* article is, as I say, not uninteresting.

■ As noted before, there is much cheering but also a more than moderate measure of carping about the new Ave Maria Law School that is being launched with funding from Thomas Monaghan's sale of Domino's Pizza. This from a report in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*: "'They're implying that the other twenty-six Catholic law schools aren't Catholic enough, so they have to take their pizza money and put it elsewhere,' grumbles Father [Robert F.] Drinan, a former dean at Boston College Law School." Monika K. Hellwig, Director of the Association of Catholic College and Universities, agrees with Fr. Drinan: "Catholic law schools, and the Jesuit schools in particular . . . pride themselves on being extremely Catholic." While news of that development is most welcome, one does hope that they will manage to keep their extremism in check.

■ In poor countries around the world, AIDS is the fastest growing cause of adult deaths. In sub-Saharan Africa, it is estimated that 22.5 million people are infected. In Botswana, 50 percent of the adult population has the disease, lowering life expectancy from 65.2 years in 1996 to 47.4 years today. Every day 4,900 Africans are dying of AIDS. According to Debbie Dortzbach, a public health professional working in Africa since 1973, the reasons for the catastrophe are several. First, the spread from the West of the sexual revolution that overwhelmed cultural restraints against promiscuity. Second, urbanization of employment, resulting in men being separated from their families for many months at a time. Third, population displacement because of wars, with the accompanying patterns of rape and promiscuity among soldiers. Fourth, the lack of health care, which multiplies the incidence of HIV. Is the situation very different among Christians? "That's a tragic part of much of the church in Africa," says Dortzbach. "There has been revival, but I don't believe there's adequate teaching or discipleship or mentoring or strengthening of husband-and-wife relationships." Both Protestants and Catholics report enormous missionary growth in Africa, but sometimes it seems that evangelization and death are racing neck and neck. Says a

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Pentecostal pastor in Zambia, "When you invest in people and spend your life with the poor, God has a way of rewarding you. Your life has been worthwhile." Small comfort, some may say, but they do not begin to understand.

■ No good deed goes unpunished. *The Jewish Discovery of Islam* (Syracuse University Press) is a tribute to Bernard Lewis, the distinguished scholar of the Middle East who in 1976 was attacked by Edward Said of Columbia University as the chief of the "Orientalists" who have, according to Said, promulgated a hatred of Islam. The book, edited by Martin Kramer and reviewed by Daniel Pipes in *Commentary*, documents the ways in which Jewish scholars, beginning in the nineteenth century, frequently took the side of Islam against Christian scholars—and, sometimes, against Christianity. Now, notes Pipes, the romantic image of Islam propagated by Jewish scholars has been largely embraced by Muslims who employ it against Jews and the State of Israel. Pipes writes, "It is an old story, this story of good will rewarded with enmity, but seldom has it been illuminated with such bitter clarity."

■ Ancient truths are ever in need of fresh and winsome restatement. That need is met in several short pamphlets sent our way and published under Lutheran auspices. "When New Life Is an Unwelcome Gift" addresses women considering an abortion and women who have had an abortion. "Is This the Way God Made Me?" and "Can Homosexual Love Be Blessed?" sympathetically engage the vexed and vexing question of sexual orientation. Clergy and local churches of all denominations may want to keep a supply of these on hand. For samples, write American Lutheran Publicity Bureau, P.O. Box 327, Delhi, New York 13573 (please include return postage).

■ So what's wrong with libertarianism? Possible answers come along at a reliable pace. Here, for instance, is a new book put out by that libertarian stronghold, the Cato Institute. Written by Stephen Moore and the late Julian Simon, it is titled *The Greatest Century That Ever Was: 25 Miraculous Trends of the Past 100 Years.* The book argues that "The latter part of the nineteenth century was an era of tuberculosis, typhoid, sanitariums, child labor, horses, horse manure, candles, twelve-hour work days, Jim Crow laws, tenements, slaughterhouses, and outhouses. At the dawn of the twenty-first century, however, life expectancy has increased by thirty years, infant mortality rates have fallen ten-fold, the number of cases of deadly disease (tuberculosis, polio, typhoid, whooping cough, and pneumonia) has fallen to fewer than fifty per 100,000, air quality has improved by 30 percent in major cities (since 1977), agricultural productivity has risen five-to-ten fold, the average annual per capita output has risen seven-fold, and real wages have nearly quadrupled." All the many examples given in support of that argument are material in nature. Not a word about culture, not a word about personal or public virtue; not a word about its being the bloodiest century in human history, with wars, genocides, and ideological crusades resulting in close to 200 million killings. For all the undoubted advances chronicled by Moore and Simon, the twentieth century, like all time short of the Kingdom of God, was a continuation of the *libido dominandi* of Augustine's terrestrial city, with the passions of vice unleashed in unprecedented horror. The greatest century that ever was? Only a mind controlled by libertarianism could think so.

■ Barry Lynn of Americans United for Separation of Church and State has issued a report, "Curious Courtship: Why the Christian Coalition is Wooing Women." The report explains that on "reproductive freedom" and other issues "the Coalition's views conflict with what women want." Freud asked, "What do women want?" Barry Lynn knows. But if he is right, he has no reason to worry about his opponents' wooing.

■ Miroslav Volf of Yale Divinity School says nothing new when he notes that oldline Protestant denominations "have been declining numerically, losing social influence, and undergoing an identity crisis." At the same time, evangelical, Pentecostal, and charismatic groups are experiencing explosive growth around the world. It took thirty years for Lutherans and Roman Catholics to reach agreement on justification by faith in the "Joint Declaration" signed last fall. Volf writes: "In the time it takes for ecumenical agreement to be reached on just one doctrine, dozens of new denominations and thousands of loosely associated congregations will emerge worldwide with a multimillion membership. All the ecumenical running notwithstanding, we will continue to fall behind." An older ecumenical movement believed that theology is important, but many today do not share that conviction. "Doctrines matter," says Volf, "and one major theological task is to help churches understand why." Without that conviction, ecumenism faces a very iffy future. "We can neither abandon an ecumenism of dialogues nor rest satisfied with it. How to get past this quandary is *the* most important problem facing the ecumenical movement today. The crisis of ecumenical

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institutions is real (as in debates about the survival and shape of the National Council of Churches), and it demands our attention. But we will hardly be able to create healthy institutions if we are unclear about the very nature of the ecumenical work that will be required in the future."

■ When I commented on Mark Hulsether's *Building a Protestant Left: Christianity and Crisis Magazine, 1941-1993*, I was not able to find much to commend it. Now, in the *Christian Century*, former *C&C* editors and others have taken issue with the book. Hulsether writes to the editors: "I wish that the crossfire involving former *C&C* constituents would consist less in us sniping at each other and more in responding to the fire directed at us from neoconservatives." Close ranks, guys. Don't you know who the enemy is?

■ Now let's see if I get this straight. Father Richard McBrien of Notre Dame comments on a new report on Catholic seminarians and sees some very real problems. First, many of them "feel quite free to defy the faculty." Second, "approximately half are either converts to Catholicism or Catholics who had not practiced their faith since childhood." Third, "for a growing proportion of seminarians (25 percent), English is their second language." In other words, they think for themselves, their vocations emerge not from "the system" but from personal conversion and decision, and they are multicultural. One might think that this would cheer the cockles of Fr. McBrien's heart, for he is the most liberal of liberals. Not at all. The problem is that these seminarians are "conservative." Or, as Fr. McBrien puts it, they are "resistant to the renewal brought about by Vatican II [and] distract faculty and other students from the work at hand." In short, they disrupt business as usual. So says Fr. McBrien, the most establishment of establishmentarians.

■ I recently spoke at the University of Pennsylvania at a conference titled "Extended Life, Eternal Life" and funded by the Templeton Foundation. It was, all in all, a chilling experience, with the "humanists" being greatly outnumbered by the "hard scientists" who made no secret of their enthusiasm for the revived eugenics project and the supposed inevitability of the eventual "conquest of mortality." The conference featured a debate between that font of moral wisdom, Leon Kass of the University of Chicago, and Lee Silver, a Princeton professor of molecular biology who is a leading propagandist for the manipulation of the genetic code in which venture capitalists and biologists have invested hopes of wealth beyond the dreams of avarice. It was a wondrous thing at the conference to listen to academics with life histories of support for leftist causes insouciantly proclaiming that decisions about the reconstruction of the *humanum* should be left to the forces of the free market. At a later date, I will return to that conference and the larger questions about the return of eugenics. Meanwhile, I note that a few days after the conference, Prof. Silver had an op-ed piece in the *Times* that concludes with this: "The public is understandably nervous about the idea of companies profiting from our genetic code. But if the goal is to make this genetic information useful as soon as possible, the debate should be focused on fair business practices and regulatory issues, not on ethics." Forget ethics. That at least has the merit of candor.

■ The *Orthodox Reader* describes itself as a newsletter on "issues of interest to Orthodox Christians." But not only to the Orthodox, one might add. A recent issue praises Paul Marshall's important book on religious persecution, *Their Blood Cries Out*, which documents in painful detail the persecution of Christians in Sudan, Nigeria, China, Egypt, and elsewhere. But then the editor writes: "Unlike many Westerners, Marshall is well informed as to the history and place of Orthodoxy. But concepts of freedom of religion clash with older concepts inherent to Orthodox doctrine." The *Orthodox Reader* follows that up with this: "When the Soviet Union collapsed, nearly every religious group on the planet looked on the newly freed peoples of the vanquished empire as fair game for proselytization. To the Protestant mind, faith has become a matter of market competition. In this milieu, it is not transcendent truth that should prevail but marketing. The shameful truth of evangelical Christianity is that it is more likely to seek conversion of other Christians than to address the hard work of making 'disciples of all the nations.'" The criticism is undoubtedly just in the case of some evangelicals, but surely the appropriate response of Russian Orthodoxy should be one of renewed evangelization of its own people rather than pressing the government to limit religious freedom. The claim that "concepts of freedom of religion clash with older concepts inherent to Orthodox doctrine" has its parallels in claims made by, for instance, Islamic countries. Call it marketing or call it evangelization, in the world that is now upon us selective support for religious freedom will not wash.

■ "For the first time the Southern Baptist Convention reports a loss rather than a gain in

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membership," says Eileen Lindner, editor of the *Yearbook of American and Canadian Churches*. "The percentage of membership loss for the convention is virtually identical to that of the Presbyterian Church (USA), raising increasing doubts about the adequacy of a conservative-church growth as opposed to a progressive-church decline scenario." While evangelical Protestants sometimes dismiss oldline Protestantism as moribund or dead, it is good to be reminded that approximately one third of the Christians in the country belong to oldline communions where local churches are often more vibrantly orthodox and missionary than the national or regional bodies of which they are part. The reminder also underscores the continuing importance of movements for theological and moral renewal within bodies such as the United Methodists, ELCA Lutherans, and Presbyterian Church (USA). On a related subject, the National Association of Evangelicals has dropped its rule that members cannot belong also to the National Council of Churches. Albert Mohler, a Southern Baptist of influence, indicates his displeasure in *World*: "The evangelical movement now embraces a vast assortment of theological positions and the NAE represents considerable diversity. Is this now to include bodies that identify with the NCC and its liberal agenda? The NAE motto has been 'cooperation without compromise.' If admitting NCC members to the NAE is not compromise, what is?" Give me a minute and I'll come up with a list. Moreover, the NAE has a rather stiff statement of faith to which member organizations must subscribe. If NCC members signed on, some might take that as good news.

■ You have likely seen stories in the press about "fanatical" Orthodox Jews in Israel who allegedly jeer, harass, and even throw human feces at the non-Orthodox who pray at Jerusalem's Western Wall in ways that violate traditional rules. "Open Season on the Orthodox" is a useful exposé of false and misleading stories published in recent years, including the tale that the Orthodox have declared the non-Orthodox to be "non-Jews." Writing in *Moment*, the largest circulation independent Jewish magazine in this country, Avi Shafran offers an interesting take on the agitated question of what counts as a valid conversion. "But perhaps nowhere is the media bias against Orthodoxy more evident than in the reporting of internal political matters in Israel. It is routine to read that the Orthodox seek to disenfranchise other Jews in the Jewish state when all that is really happening (and has happened for the more than fifty years of Israel's existence) is that attempts are being made to maintain conversion standards accepted by all religious Jews for millennia. The rather straightforward and reasonable notion that multiple standards for conversion will yield multiple Jewish peoples in Israel is seldom given expression in news reports; only the 'Orthodox monopoly'—with evil and unfair undertones—is blamed. The United States government maintains standards, too, for everything from food labeling to immigration. Seldom, though, does one find either the Food and Drug Administration or the Immigration and Naturalization Service condemned as a monopoly. Is it outrageous for the Jewish state to have a standard—not to mention one with the weight of history and Jewish religious tradition behind it—for conversion?" Shafran concludes that "the way the Orthodox are portrayed and projected today is painfully reminiscent of the way all Jews have been portrayed by their enemies. Tragically, the Orthodox have become the Jews' own Jews."

■ Commenting on Vermont's judicial edict that the legislators create something equivalent to marriage for gays and lesbians, Mark Steyn observes that forty years of experiments in "redefining" marriage and family, and forty years of studies of those experiments, lead to the clear conclusion that redefining is disastrous, especially for children. The evidence is in and the general rule is that single parent children and children of divorce are much more likely to end up out of school, or on drugs, or in jail, or all three. And of course academic research is not fine-tuned to register the other unhappinesses they experience. But, as Steyn notes, one thing leads to another. "Given that heterosexuals redefined marriage to provide easier opt-out clauses, it's no surprise that others have used that wedge to create opt-in clauses." His description of the upshot of all this may be slightly exaggerated: "Meanwhile, a generation of American children has learned to keep its suitcase packed and a bundle of change-of-address cards on hand. . . . On Sunday Junior's with Mommy and her lesbian wife, Monday with Grammy and Grampa from Mommy's first, non-gay marriage, Tuesday with Mommy's gay biological sperm donor, Wednesday with Mommy's lesbian's egg donor's boyfriend, Thursday with his turkey baster's manufacturer's ex-wife, Friday with his shrink. And, if the shrink's not enough, he can join the rest of the most medicated generation of children in U.S. history on his daily dose of Prozac and/or Ritalin, which seems to work pretty well, at least until the day the kid forgets to take it and guns down his schoolyard."

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■ On the website of the United Ministry at Harvard and Radcliffe there is posted a warning to new students about "certain destructive religious groups" that are not part of the United Ministry. Such groups are proselytizing, sometimes claim "a special relationship to God," and lead to "ego destruction, mind control, manipulation of a member's relationships with family and friends." "All the members of the United Ministry," on the other hand, "are committed to mutual respect and non-proselytization. We affirm the roles of personal freedom, doubt, and open critical reflection in healthy spiritual growth. . . . We're here to help you have a healthy, happy experience of your own spiritual journey while you're here at Harvard." And Jesus said, "I have come to help you have a healthy, happy experience of your own spiritual journey."

■ In 1988 the American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America joined to form the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The ALC had a "low church" and pietistic tradition that has now come to the fore with a group called Word Alone that is opposing full communion with the Episcopal Church. The chief sticking point is that full communion would mean Lutherans accepting ordination in an "episcopal succession" received from the Episcopalians. Pastors Leonard Klein and Russell Saltzman write in *Forum Letter*, an independent Lutheran publication edited by Saltzman, that the resolution of this question "will mark the real end of the merger process" begun in the 1970s. Alternatively, the authors say, it will result in a schism in the ELCA. This is not your usual liberal/conservative split, they note. The Word Alone folk include proponents of gay/lesbian ordination, the abortion license, quota systems, and other items usually termed liberal. It is rather a split between Lutherans who understand ministry in terms of "Word and Sacrament" and those who think the Lutheran Reformation signaled liberation from the Great Tradition. The authors write: "What emerges from Word Alone is what also explains other misfires by the ELCA, the misunderstanding of Lutheranism as the bearer of a bare Protestant Principle that descends to antinomian freedom. Protestant Principle in the hands of Word Alone looks like a high school textbook definition of the Reformation. The Reformation replaced the Magisterium of the Church with the private interpretation of Scripture by the individual. Luther becomes the first modern man, overturning authority for the sake of individual conscience. The hierarchy is scuttled for local autonomy. The believer now has unmediated access to God in a church without saints, sacraments, or clergy. Such Protestantism becomes, as in the light-hearted verse of one northern Irish song, 'the old cause which gave us our freedom, religion and laws.'" At the end of the day, however, Klein and Saltzman do not think there will be a major schism. "The ELCA leadership should hold its course, keep talking, keep interpreting, and let the [Word Alone] movement collapse of its own weightlessness." As a former editor of *Forum Letter*, I am inclined to think that Klein and Saltzman are right in their prognosis. At the same time, it is questionable whether, by entering into full communion with the Episcopalians, the ELCA would be moving closer to reconciliation with Rome, as some "evangelical catholics" in the ELCA believe. There is the matter of Rome's not recognizing the validity of Anglican ministerial orders, and, perhaps more important, the increasingly indeterminate nature of the Episcopal Church's doctrinal commitment. In dialogues of recent decades, Rome has come to appreciate the theological substance and seriousness of Lutherans, a substance and seriousness that some think might be diluted by full communion with Episcopalians. On the other hand, if Lutheran theology takes the viscerally anti-Catholic turn of Word Alone, any hope for reconciliation with Rome is almost certainly doomed. History, it has been observed, is distressingly reluctant to give us the options we prefer.

■ The Canadian Parliament has passed Bill C-23, which changes about seventy federal laws in order to put same-sex marriages on the same legal basis as common-law marriages. It was fought by the Centre for Cultural Renewal and other groups who pointed out, inter alia, that the best research indicates that common law has come a cropper and is a flimsy foundation for the attempted legitimation of homosexual unions. But it was pushed through with almost no debate by the very illiberal Liberal government that demanded a party-line vote. The name of the new law is apt: An Act to Modernize Obligations and Benefits. "But you promised!" she protested. "Forget it, baby. Promises have been modernized."

■ Another reality check on evangelical Protestants. Well, at least a statistical check, which is not necessarily the same thing as reality. A national survey of 475 "evangelical leaders" has only 9 percent thinking that evangelical political involvement has been nonproductive and that evangelicals should withdraw from the arena. Then there is this item on immigration, a subject on which

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evangelicals, who tend to be conservative, are thought to be a touch xenophobic. To the statement "Immigrants harm society by bringing strange customs and beliefs," 68 percent disagree, 23 percent aren't sure, and only 9 percent agree. Is nothing stereotypical any more?

■ It arrived the day before I was scheduled to debate Ira Glasser, Executive Director of the ACLU, at Baruch College, and it came in very handy indeed. "The Growing Impact of Charitable Choice" is a ninety-page study by Dr. Amy L. Sherman on what is happening in nine states since the 1996 welfare reform opened the way to closer collaboration between government and "faith-based organizations." The study is sponsored by the Center for Public Justice, which is doing the important job of staying on top of these developments. The debate went very well, or so my friends said. (Mr. Glasser's friends probably told him the same.) A curious thing is that Mr. Glasser seemed to concede that public policy thinking and the courts are fast making the old "strict separationist" arguments about church and state obsolete. He focused almost entirely on contraception and abortion, claiming that religiously connected social services and hospitals "impose their morality" by denying people the choices that are their right. Thus did he reinforce the plausibility of the claim that the agenda of the ACLU on church-state questions is driven most importantly by its commitment to the unlimited abortion license. When pressed, he allowed that the abortion "right" is hotly disputed politically and may not be settled in law. "But I cannot imagine," he said, "any circumstance in which the right to abortion, at least in the first trimester and perhaps with some restrictions, will be overturned." In view of the don't-give-an-inch intransigence of the ACLU on abortion, including its extremist defense of partial-birth abortion, that is a notable concession on the fragility of *Roe v. Wade* and its judicial progeny. But, as I said, the slated subject of the debate was government cooperation with faith-based institutions, and for authoritative information on that subject one can do no better than the Sherman and other studies produced by the Center for Public Justice (P.O. Box 48368, Washington, D.C. 20002).

■ A perverse side of supply-side economics, according to critics of the welfare state, is that, if you supply things free, it increases the demand for free things. Not always, however. The *St. Louis Post-Dispatch* runs a lengthy story on the problem of high school students who are too "proud" to apply for free lunch programs. They don't want to admit that their families are poor and dependent. The problem is that the grading of schools and the level of state aid for students is keyed to the number of students who are certified as poor. So schools are enticing students not to feed themselves by offering five instead of three entrees in the cafeterias and giving away free video games and CD players to students who file a school-lunch application. Students who buy their own food are disrupting a system of dependency on which the schools have become dependent. Uppity students who refuse to think of themselves as poor are rocking the boat. For the system, it's a matter of following a novel spin on the words of Jesus, "The poor we need to have always with us."

■ There is environmentalism that is a capacious blanket for sundry leftisms that would otherwise be left shivering in the cold, and then there is environmentalism premised upon the sound biblical premise that we are stewards of the creation. The second environmentalism has received an important boost by the formation of the Interfaith Council for Environmental Stewardship, which has issued the "Cornwall Declaration on Environmental Stewardship," which, it says here, is "signed by hundreds of America's most influential religious leaders." They also let me sign it. The Council will soon be bringing out a book, *Environmental Stewardship in the Judeo-Christian Tradition*, on which more later. For further information, write the Acton Institute, 161 Ottawa Avenue NW, Suite 301, Grand Rapids, Michigan 49503 or click on www.acton.org/environment.

■ I mentioned earlier that, on the day that John Paul II was ordaining twelve bishops in Rome, the Beijing regime ordered the ordination of five bishops in the Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association. That was viewed as a very direct slap in the face of the Pope. But, according to the *South China Morning Post*, the occasion may have been more of an embarrassment to the regime. The plan was for twelve men to be ordained bishops, but only five showed up, the others refusing to be ordained without papal permission. Moreover, according to those present at the ceremony, the five publicly and loudly swore allegiance to the Pope, despite a choir that attempted to drown out what they were saying. If that was not embarrassment enough, the 130 seminarians at the state-run National Seminary in Beijing refused to attend the ceremony, although they had earlier participated in rehearsals for it. Pray for the faithful Christians of China, Catholic and Protestant, who every day are teaching us the cost of discipleship. On

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the encouraging side of the ledger, a few months later the regime permitted the ordination of two bishops who publicly declare their full communion with Rome. Go figure.

■ Notably dirty in the Dirty Tricks Dept. of the current presidential campaign to date was the effort of the Democratic leadership to tar Republicans with anti-Catholicism. (Remember Bob Jones University and the House chaplaincy?) Now the Gallup people have done a national survey in which they find that Democrats and Independents are somewhat more likely than Republicans to view Catholicism unfavorably. ("Whereas 55 percent of liberals in this country dissociate themselves from a church, only 35 percent of conservatives fall into the same category.") Among evangelical and born-again Protestants—that hotbed of anti-Catholic and other prejudices—29 percent have an unfavorable opinion of Catholicism. Among oldline/mainline Protestants the figure is 30 percent. Among those who never go to church or synagogue, fully 54 percent have a negative opinion of the Catholic Church. Upon reflection, there should be no surprise in these findings, but they are worth noting as another item in a long list of things that everybody knows but are not so.

■ Pro-abortionists were frustrated at the recent Beijing+5 meeting at the UN when hundreds of young pro-lifers showed up in a well-coordinated effort to demonstrate that the "voice of the people" is somewhat more diverse than the planners claimed. Planned Parenthood and others took steps to exclude such inconvenient diversity at the next gathering, a special meeting described as "intersessional." Intercession was in order, and at the June meeting it seemed to work, as an even larger contingent of activists prevented the NGO establishment from further expanding the list of anti-life, anti-marriage, and anti-family "rights."

■ That astute cultural critic Gertrude Himmelfarb reads large lessons from John McCain's campaign going down in flames after he was perceived to be attacking religious conservatives as "forces of evil." That was hardly the only thing in the primaries that highlighted the continuing force of what are aptly called the culture wars, but it was an important moment underscoring the fact that, despite remarkable prosperity and the appearance of general contentment, this election will likely be decided by deeper currents in our public life. Writing in *Commentary*, Himmelfarb says, "This, in short, has been a more instructive primary season than most, for it has obliged us once again to take the measure of our country. What we have witnessed is not a political war in the usual sense—a war waged first among the several factions within each party and then between the two parties. Nor is it, more ominously, a *Kulturkampf*, a religious war that threatens to alter the longstanding relations of church and state. It is something more than the first and less than the second—a new episode in the culture wars that, contrary to the predictions of some, continue to engage us as they have for almost a half century. True, these wars have subsided in recent years, but—unlike the Cold War—they have not gone away. True, too, Americans have never been more prosperous than they are today, and they have sound reason to be contented and optimistic. But good times and good feelings have not dulled their moral and religious sensibilities. The Gilded Age, it is evident, does not satisfy all human needs or solve all social problems. Nor do Good Feelings nullify or transcend deeply held values and beliefs."

■ There was that marvelous moment at Cardinal O'Connor's funeral when Bernard Cardinal Law declared from the pulpit that "the Church must always be unambiguously pro-life." This was met by three minutes of standing applause by the thousands in the cathedral, while the Clintons and Gores squirmed. Reporting the event in the next day's *New York Times*, Adam Nagourney wrote, "In politics, the phrase 'pro-life' is shorthand for opposition to abortion." Really? In most other venues, such an explanation would seem condescending and unnecessary, but the *Times* never uses the term "pro-life," and the self-importance of the *Times* is such that it is assumed that, if a term is not used by the *Times*, it is unknown. Thus, for instance, the paper has run hundreds of stories on the controversy over partial-birth abortion, each time explaining that "partial-birth abortion is a term employed by abortion opponents in referring to" etc. Many years ago I remarked in passing to a *Times* reporter that they should change their style in an item of ecclesiastical nomenclature. It was a minor point and I had quite forgotten about it until I received a three-page letter from the then managing editor that the suggestion had been relayed to him and, after thorough research, they had decided I was right and would change their style book. The last line of the letter explains it all: "And so, Pastor Neuhaus [I was then a Lutheran], you may have the satisfaction of knowing that, in some small way, you have changed history."

■ This from the AP wire: "Lawrenceburg, Ky.—Flames shot fifty feet into the air Tuesday as a blaze

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consumed a seven-story warehouse full of Wild Turkey bourbon and reduced it to rubble, threatening the city's water supply." One man's threat is another's opportunity.

■ At Gonzaga University, the president, Father Robert Spitzer, disinvited a speaker representing Planned Parenthood because that organization is the country's leading institutional perpetrator of what the Catholic Church teaches is the "unspeakable crime" of abortion. Fr. Thomas Reese, editor of *America*, told a Spokane newspaper, "To ban people from coming on campus is an admission that you have not been able to convince your students of the truth . . . and you don't want people who could lead them astray." Were he pressed on the matter, I have little doubt that Fr. Reese would come up with a list of people who should not be invited to speak on Catholic campuses. It is simply that his list does not include proponents and practitioners of abortion. "This is a fight I thought we went through in the sixties," Fr. Reese adds. Ah yes, the good old days of thirty years ago when things seemed so clearly defined. For a certain stripe of progressive, change is painfully unsettling.

■ John Leo of *U.S. News & World Report* says that forty students at the State University of New York, Albany, protested the use of the word "picnic" to describe an event honoring baseball's great Jackie Robinson. The students charged racism, claiming that "picnic" originally referred to lynchings of blacks. Leo points out that it is a seventeenth-century French word for a gathering in which people bring their own food. The university's affirmative action director, Zaheer Mustafa, agreed with the students, and the posters for the event were changed to call it an "outing." After homosexual students objected to that, the event was publicized without a noun indicating what was going on. "Don't ask, don't tell" is not just for the military any more.

■ The argument has been called clever, and it is that, but it is also more than that. In his new book *Bobos in Paradise: The New Upper Class and How They Got There* (Simon & Schuster), David Brooks proves himself an acute analyst of society and culture. The Bobos (bourgeois bohemians) in question are the people who are sometimes called "the new class"—well-educated, hard-working, and achievement-oriented folk who more or less live by bourgeois values but do so with an ironic lacing of self-consciously sophisticated bohemianism. Brooks recognizes that he is himself a Bobo, and he offers in a humorous and sometimes self-deprecating vein a mass of details on the jargon, eating habits, dress, musical tastes, distinctive consumption, and domestic habits of the elite to which he belongs. This new upper class, he says, is probably secure for as far as we can see into the future because it is an intensely meritocratic elite that is self-critical and morally flexible enough to co-opt whatever might challenge its rule. All in all, says Brooks, this is a fairly happy state of affairs. The morality of Bobos "doesn't try to perch atop the high ground of divine revelation." They are interested in spirituality but "cautious of moral crusades and religious enthusiasms. . . . They tolerate a little lifestyle experimentation, so long as it is done safely and moderately. They are offended by concrete wrongs, like cruelty and racial injustice, but are relatively unmoved by lies or transgressions that don't seem to do anyone obvious harm." Mr. Brooks' conclusion is that "This is a good morality for building a decent society." Brooks writes regularly for the *Weekly Standard* and is usually thought to be a conservative. There is, in fact, something deeply conservative about not expecting too much from people, about recognizing the value of quotidian niceness. At the same time, in his depiction, Bobos are preciously self-referential beings, apparently attuned to the bargain basement utilitarianism of a pleasure/pain calculus that is hardly up to providing a reason for bearing the burdens of others, or even to coping with the inevitabilities of their own serious self-doubt, failure, fragility, and death. Like the denizens of Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World*, there are few intensities among these people amply supplied with the soma of their smugly mutual approbation. It is difficult to know what the phrase "decent society" means in this case, absent the awareness of evil or transcendent good. Brooks provides a clever and sometimes insightful analysis, but we have to hope that, as a generalization about our new ruling class, it is wrong. In his telling, the Bobos are philistines. Affluent, talented, and fashionably ironic philistines, to be sure, but philistines nonetheless. Their "paradise" is purchased at too high a cost to their humanity.

■ Fear of Christianity, writes Yossi Klein Halevi of the *Jerusalem Report*, is one of the few emotions shared by secular and religious Israelis. "And so watching the Israeli media's coverage of the Pope's visit felt almost illicit. Never before had Israelis been exposed so intensively and so positively to Christianity. The government TV channel's logo for the visit featured a cross. News segments described the Sermon on the Mount, newscasters quoted from the New Testament, and the Hebrew press discovered that monks and nuns actually live among us. Suddenly Christianity

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became part of the Israeli landscape. The Vatican recognized Israel in 1993, but only last week did the Israeli public reciprocate. Like the rapprochement with Germany in the 1950s and the peace process with the Arab world in the 1990s, the normalization of relations with Christianity is easing the traumas of exile and making Israel a healthier society." Watching the papal Mass on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, Halevi unexpectedly found himself feeling grateful to Jesus. "Jews traditionally blamed Jesus for their woes; but, as an Israeli, I could appreciate him for connecting the Christian world to my country, enhancing this land with prayer. I thought of the secular Zionist pioneers who'd founded the first kibbutzim along the Sea of Galilee; little did they realize that welcoming Jesus home would be Zionism's final gift of healing to the Jews." Watching the Mass held on the Mount of Beatitudes, Martin Peretz of the *New Republic* was impressed that "Jewish-Catholic relations will never be the same again." At the same time, he had a more doleful thought: "But this stunning achievement comes also in the dark dusk of Christianity's own immemorial existence in the Holy Land. Palestine's Christian diaspora, like that of the rest of the Middle East, is now scattered from Sydney to Buenos Aires to Detroit—scattered, mostly, by political Islam. The Pope's Mass on the Mount of the Beatitudes was peopled not with 100,000 local Christians but with pilgrims who wanted to follow the Holy Father in the footsteps of Jesus. One more reason for this towering man to weep."

■ The Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) aired a "dramatic comedy" that featured a dog receiving communion at a Catholic Mass. In response to viewer protests, the CBC sent out a form letter. "It is true that a scene from the film depicts a parishioner having communion with her dog, but by no means is this event or other religious rites portrayed in the film done in a disrespectful manner." Oh well, that's okay then. So long as sacrilege is depicted in a respectful manner.

■ The United Methodist Church (UMC), with 8.4 million members, is sometimes called the mainline of the Protestant mainline. The recent General Conference, which is the church's highest decision-making body, gave evidence of mainly heartening redirections. Perhaps most significant was a 70 percent vote putting the UMC on record as opposing partial-birth abortion. Before this, UM agencies have relentlessly and without exception opposed any limits on the abortion license. Reaffirmed was the position that homosexual acts are incompatible with Christian ethics and admission to Christian ministry. Overwhelmingly passed was an addition to the church's Social Principles stating that "the state should not prohibit the free exercise of voluntary prayer in public schools or at other public occasions." This, too, was a change, in that UM agencies in the past opposed school prayer initiatives. The Social Principles flatly condemned all war and UM agencies opposed almost all U.S. military initiatives, but now it is officially acknowledged that "most Christians" believe war is justified in some circumstances, such as "unchecked aggression, tyranny, and genocide." Moreover, the church's credal affirmation was firmed up with the assertion that Jesus Christ is the "Son of God, the Savior of the world, and the Lord of all." Finally, in a message to Pope John Paul II and in response to his confession of the use of force against Protestants, the General Conference said, "In the instance of misunderstandings, insensitivities, and harm brought about by the United Methodist Church and its predecessors in faith to the Roman Catholic Church and Roman Catholics, we, in turn, ask forgiveness for our deeds of commission and omission." Oh yes, and more than 30 percent of voting delegates voted to dismantle the Board of Church and Society, the leftist Washington lobby of the denomination. The majority were not willing to go that far but clearly wanted to send a message that the "silent majority" in the UMC is silent no more. Some describe this General Conference in terms of a conservative ascendancy, and there may be something to that. What seems to be beyond doubt is that the membership is less and less inclined to uncritically acquiesce in the line imposed by the denominational bureaucracy, and that is surely a sign of vitality.

■ I don't have the exact figures, but it may be that most Catholic bishops do not permit pro-choice politicians to speak under auspices they control. The pro-choice governor of Pennsylvania, Tom Ridge, was recently the featured speaker at the annual dinner of the Foundation for the Roman Catholic Diocese of Altoona-Johnstown. The bishop explained in his diocesan newspaper: "No doubt, it is difficult to be the chief. I can empathize with that. Nevertheless, in order to be faithful to the living out of Christ's mission within us, we must witness to the totality of his teachings, no matter what our office and no matter what the 'fallout.' That is why he, as Governor, should seriously consider changing his position to a pro-life posture. That is why I, as Bishop, allowed the Governor to speak." Any other questions?

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■ "The American Assembly." The very name bespeaks the super-establishment status of this project that was launched in 1950 by Dwight D. Eisenhower at Columbia University. Its board of trustees includes venerable names of American finance, industry, and diplomacy, and it is amply funded by a long list of leading foundations and corporations. Meeting at Arden House, an elegant home given to Columbia by W. Averell Harriman, the Ninety-Sixth American Assembly, as part of a larger project titled "Uniting America: Toward Common Purpose," recently addressed "Matters of Faith: Religion in American Public Life," the ubiquitous Martin E. Marty moderating the discussion among fifty-seven participants. I mean no disrespect when I say that, given the above profile, one might have limited expectations. The predictable product would be composed either of establishment banalities or politically correct clichés, the two frequently being indistinguishable. In fact, that did not happen. The final report is, all in all, a remarkably intelligent, balanced, and useful reflection on religion and public life. The report's epigraph cites the Declaration on "unalienable rights," plus Article VI of the Constitution against religious tests and the Religion Clause of the First Amendment. "We, the participants in the Religion in Public Life American Assembly, in recognition of our religiously diverse American union, reaffirm the intrinsic worth and dignity of each human being and our commitment to the principle of religious freedom." That's the opening line. Note "human being," not "person," as in *Roe v. Wade*'s dicta about who counts as a person. The statement affirms "the right of individuals and faith communities to bring their beliefs into the arena of public discourse. . . . Religious voices are a vital component of our national conversation, and should be heard in the public square. . . . Every local school district should work with parents and community leaders to develop clear religious liberty policies on student religious expression that reflect the new consensus under current law. . . . This Assembly generally supports the concept of cooperation between government and faith-based organizations in the provision of social services. The religious character of their efforts often can be integral to their programs. . . . This Assembly's work together has reminded us that religious liberty is a bedrock value that animates our republic, undergirds our civic morality, and defines us as a people." Those are but a few highlights from a twenty-three-page statement that deserves to become an important point of reference in ongoing public discussion. Among the fifty-seven participants are names familiar to the readers of this journal, including: Hadley Arkes, Jean Bethke Elshtain, Robert P. George, Diane Knippers, David Novak, and William L. Saunders. There are many things that they and we might want said that are not said here, but if one is looking for a consensus statement reflecting what Christians, Jews, Muslims, and others of various ethnic, racial, and ideological backgrounds can say together on these questions at the beginning of a new century, there is nothing comparable to *Matters of Faith: Religion in American Public Life.* The statement is available from The American Assembly, 475 Riverside Drive, New York, New York 10115 or at www.americanassembly.org.

■ Those of a certain age will remember when Woody Allen was considered, with considerable justice, a great comic talent. Subsequent years have not been kind to him, or he to them. Now there is his Cinemax TV movie, *Picking Up the Pieces.* Allen has said, "I'm Jewish, but I'm not religious in any significant way; I don't have any respect for any of the major religions." He has a most particular thing about Catholicism, however. The plot of the film turns around a butcher (Allen) who carves up his wife and buries the parts in a desert, where one of the hands (with a stiff middle finger) is discovered by a blind woman who is promptly cured and declares it to be the hand of the Virgin Mary. She goes to a money-grubbing priest (who is having sex with a prostitute) and he advertises the hand as a miracle-working relic that has produced such wonders as enlarged breasts for a woman and a big penis for a dwarf. Along the way, we are informed that Mary Magdalene was Jesus' whore and Mother Teresa had "sex slaves." Sometimes the kindest thing is simply to avert one's eyes and remember people for the gift that once was theirs.

■ How one doctor got into deep trouble with the medical establishment when he refused to cooperate with the abortion regime of *Roe v. Wade* is the story told in *I'll Bet My Life On It: One Doctor's Experience in American Medicine* by Ronald G. Connolly (361 pp., plus appendices. Available through Amazon.com, list price $21).

■ "Dr. Laura [Schlessinger] is one of America's most forceful and persuasive advocates for traditional marriage and family. She opposes the radical project of gay activists, and the secular left in general, to eliminate religious values from public life. That is why these intolerant extremists are determined to silence her." So says Rabbi Daniel Lapin of Toward Tradition, and I have no doubt he is right about that. A small downside about living in Manhattan and not having an automobile is that I

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have few occasions to listen to talk radio. I have heard Dr. Schlessinger a couple of times and that, together with what friends tell me, makes me think she's on the side of the angels, if a bit peremptory in her judgments—perhaps necessarily so, given the format of the program. Those who want to censure or, if possible, silence her are apparently upset by her assertions that homosexuality is a deviation from the heterosexual norm, a proposition that would seem to be beyond reasonable debate. A reader says this journal should be in the forefront of shaming her enemies into giving up their persecution of her. A good idea perhaps, but our pitifully limited forces are already deployed on many fronts, and, in any event, the shameless are not easily shamed. The culture wars provide a target-rich environment, and many do not receive the attention they deserve. We try to do our little bit, however, and I am grateful that, in this instance, Rabbi Lapin and many others are able to do more.

■ In the culture wars, writes Brigham Young University professor of law Frederick Mark Gedicks, Mormons occupy something of a "no man's land." Members of the LDS share with the left "the sensitivity to minorities," but that is not enough of a bond "to overcome the broad range of issues on which our views are unquestionably conservative." At the same time, however, "It is far from clear that Latter-day Saint interests are better served by a public morality defined by a majoritarian religious movement little concerned about minority rights, instead of a secular morality which disdains religion as anachronistic and irrelevant but which nevertheless is committed to protecting the rights of religious minorities." The gist of his argument is that, while Mormons and conservative Christians are allied on many issues in the culture wars, the alliance is more strategic—perhaps even tactical—than substantive and should by no means be taken for granted.

■ Yes, I saw the article by Franklin Foer in the *New Republic* ("Is Bush Catholic?") alleging that my friends and I, in league with certain evangelical Protestant coconspirators, have captured the Bush campaign to advance Catholic social doctrine. Although my influence is much exaggerated by Mr. Foer, there is considerable truth in the claim that Governor Bush has embraced, at least in part, the concept of "subsidiarity" and the role of "mediating institutions" in society, as is evident in, for example, his proposals for parental choice in education, the importance of faith-based institutions in meeting social needs, and the devolution of decision making to those most affected by the decisions made. While good liberals at *TNR* may think there is something sinister in this, I, not surprisingly, find it quite heartening. And, of course, I would be glad to discuss subsidiarity with Mr. Gore as well, but so far he has not invited me.

■ Here's another release from the Barna Research Group of Ventura, California. "The Faith Factor in Election 2000: Christians Could be a Swing Vote." About 90 percent of Americans claim to be Christians, and Barna's definition of "born-again Christians" includes eighty-three million adults, of whom sixty million are regular voters. A swing vote? It sounds more like an absolute majority. It is a little like news reporters ominously observing that a candidate is dependent upon "the religious right," which means voters who are both Christian and conservative. The suggestion is that democracy is threatened by upwards of a hundred million citizens injecting themselves into the political process. Who let *them* in?

■ We will have more on this later, but you should know about a most heartening development. You may have seen news reports on *The Marriage Movement: A Statement of Principles.* I was pleased to sign it, along with an astonishing array of public figures across the political and ideological spectrum who have come to recognize the urgency of a cultural, moral, and public policy effort in support of the institution of marriage. This important initiative is sponsored by the University of Chicago Divinity School and the Institute for American Values. For more information, write the Institute at 1841 Broadway, New York, New York 10023 or visit the website, www.marriagemovement.org.

■ In the tenth anniversary issue I had some remarks on how we came up with the name of the journal. The Ur-source, so to speak, is Origen's *Peri Archon,* which may be roughly translated as "first things." Along the way, I denied that we had stolen the name from Hadley Arkes' fine book by the same title, and certainly not from a 1924 book, *First Things,* which is a collection of exhortative essays by one Cheesman Herrick. An alert reader, Christian Mikkelson, writes to report that in the stacks of McCabe Library at Swarthmore College there is another book by Mr. Herrick, published in 1936 and titled, wouldn't you know it, *More First Things.* Mr. Mikkelson goes on to say that he had always assumed that the title of the journal was inspired by the reflections of C. S. Lewis in *God in the Dock.* There Lewis wrote, "You can't get second things by putting them first; you can get

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second things only by putting first things first. . . . What things are first? . . . The only reply I can offer here is that if we do not know, then the first and only truly practical thing is to set about finding out." I had read *God in the Dock* many years ago—in fact, it is an expression I employ in my new book, *Death on a Friday Afternoon*—and it may very well be that I had forgotten that that is how "first things" got into my head in the first place. Origen or Lewis? I can live with either.

■ We really do not make a point of being provocative. But we receive more than enough letters from readers who say they are provoked, not meaning that in a complimentary sense. Our purpose is to present ideas clearly, honestly, fairly, and engagingly. And it is gratifying in the extreme that we hear from many more readers saying that that is why FT is their favorite publication. We will be happy to send a sample issue of this journal to people you think are likely subscribers. Please send names and addresses to FIRST THINGS, 156 Fifth Avenue, Suite 400, New York, NY 10010 (or e-mail to subscriberservices@pma-inc.net). On the other hand, if they're ready to subscribe, call toll-free 1-800-783-4903.

Sources: *New York Times* articles on Cardinal O'Connor, May 7, 2000.

WHILE WE'RE AT IT: D. D. Guttenplan on David Irving, *Atlantic Monthly*, February 2000. David Blankenhorn on marriage and public policy, *Propositions*, Winter 2000. On condoms and seat belts, *Lancet*, January 29, 2000. Charles C. West on Marxism, *International Bulletin of Missionary Research*, January 2000. Gregg Easterbrook on late-term abortions, *New Republic*, January 31, 2000. On Thomas Monaghan and Ave Maria Law School, *Chronicle of Higher Education*, February 18, 2000. On AIDS in Africa, *Christianity Today*, February 7, 2000. *The Jewish Discovery of Islam* reviewed by Daniel Pipes, *Commentary*, March 2000. On book *The Greatest Century That Ever Was*, Cato Institute press release, December 15, 1999. Miroslav Volf on ecumenism, *Christian Century*, March 1, 2000. Mark Hulsether letter to *Christian Century*, March 1, 2000. Richard McBrien on Catholic seminarians, *National Catholic Reporter*, March 3, 2000. Lee Silver op-ed on genetic engineering, *New York Times*, March 16, 2000. On *Their Blood Cries Out* by Paul Marshall, *Orthodox Reader*, April 2000. Statistics on Southern Baptist and mainline churches, *Christian Century*, March 8, 2000, and *World*, March 25, 2000. On untruthful media reports about Orthodox Jews in Israel, *Moment*, February 2000. Mark Steyn on the redefinition of marriage, *Spectator*, January 15, 2000. On the ALC, LCA, and ELCA, *Forum Letter*, April 2000. On Canada's Bill C-23, personal correspondence. National Association of Evangelicals survey question on immigration, *Insight*, April 2000. On free school lunches and dependency, *World*, February 12, 2000. On ordination of Chinese bishops, *South China Morning Post*, March 2, 2000. Comparative anti-Catholicism, *Catholic New York*, April 13, 2000. Gertrude Himmelfarb on "The Election and the Culture War," *Commentary*, May 2000. AP story on fire at Wild Turkey bourbon warehouse, May 9, 2000. Fr. Thomas Reese on banning campus speakers, quoted in Cardinal Newman Society press release, May 8, 2000. On the Jackie Robinson event at SUNY-Albany, Family Research Council press release, May 16, 2000. Yossi Klein Halevi on the Pope in Israel and Martin Peretz on the Christian diaspora, *New Republic*, April 10, 2000. On Canadian Broadcasting Corporation program showing a dog receiving communion at a Catholic Mass, *National Post*, May 16, 2000. On the United Methodist Church, IRD press release, May 17, 2000; *Catholic Trends*, May 13, 2000. Woody Allen quoted in Catholic League press release, May 24, 2000. On Dr. Laura, press release from *Toward Tradition*, May 30, 2000. Frederick Mark Gedicks on the Mormons, *BYU Studies*, vol. 38, no. 3 (1999). Franklin Foer on George W. Bush and "subsidiarity," *New Republic*, June 5, 2000. "The Faith Factor in Election 2000," Barna Research Group report, February 19, 2000.

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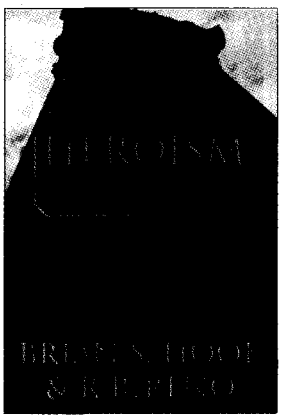

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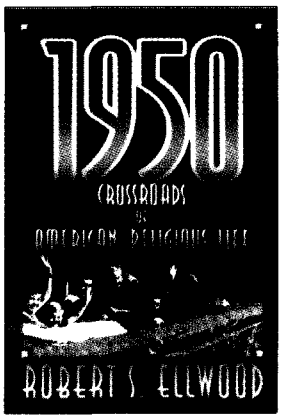

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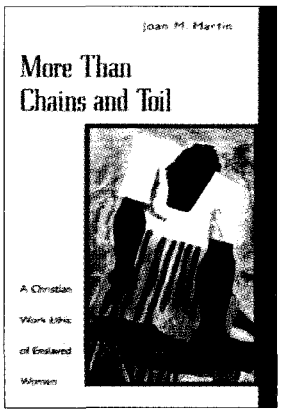

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